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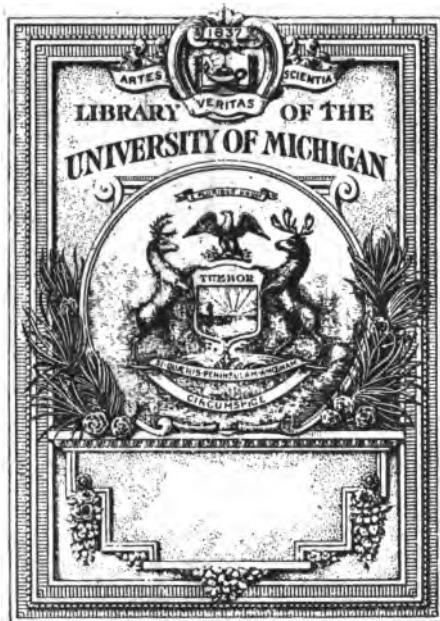
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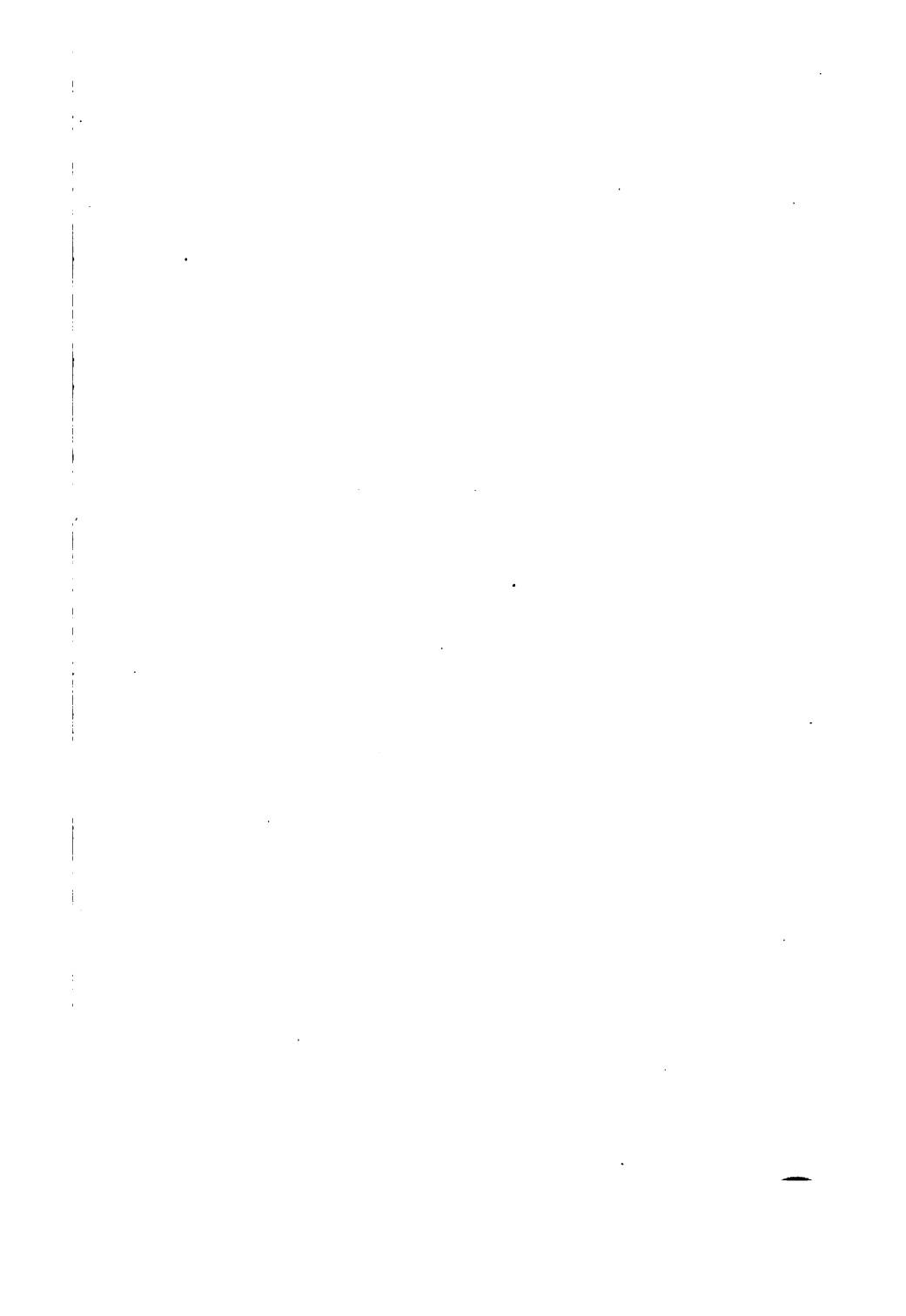
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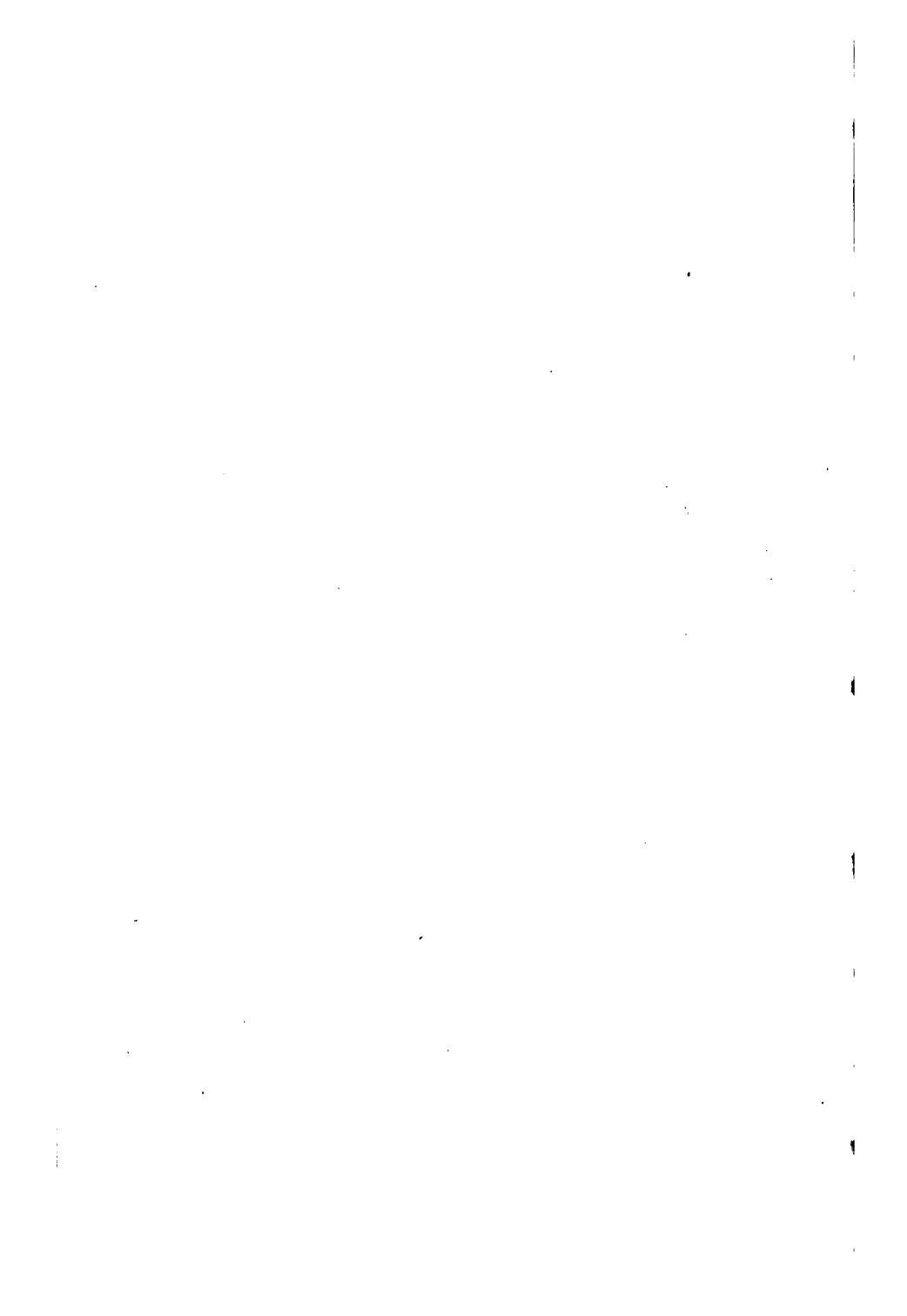


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DOUBTERS AND THEIR DOUBTS

BY

CHARLES DAVID DARLING, PH.D.



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CHAPTER I

A PLEA FOR THE HONEST DOUBTER

"Prove all things: hold fast that which is good."

I. THREE DISTINGUISHING MARKS OF LIFE

The three distinguishing marks of life are, growth, organization, and reproduction. Where they are not found, life is not found. If a man's body were to cease completely all the processes that make for the nourishment, the sustenance, the replacement, and the vitalising of itself,—all assimilation, secretion and elimination— he would be dead in a few hours. When the body ceases seeking new sources of supply, when it ceases assimilation, it soon ceases doing anything.

But this is also true of the psychic life, of the mind. When the mind ceases to desire to know, it ceases to grow. When men and women cease to ask questions, they cease to make progress. They are like coin secreted in a stocking. It earns nothing; they learn nothing. Normal minds are seeking minds. The great-

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est thing in life is desire. When the plant ceases to desire and to assimilate sunshine it dies. When life no longer contains any desire, we want to quit. The search for the truth of things is the fuel that feeds the flame of life. When fresh supplies are no longer added, the embers smoulder beneath the ashes. And such do men become who have ceased to seek and ceased to grow. The ashes of the grave are gathering over them. Age is no bar to growth. It is often an excuse for indolence. It should be an incentive to effort. For its resources are rich in experience, and should be replete with wisdom; and the call of eternity is echoing in the chambers of the soul.

The refusal to search, to seek, to inquire, to study, to learn, is, then, no indication of superiority,—rather is it a mark of inferiority. What do we think of the boy who wants to quit school? What do we think of the youth who wantonly turns his back upon college? What is our estimate of the man who does not desire to read? Wherever we find a force in the world that is mighty in its influences upon humanity, there we are met with a challenge to investigate, to discover, to learn, to inquire. And the mark of real superiority in mentality is the acceptance of the challenge.

**II. TRUTH ALWAYS THE GAINER BY
INVESTIGATION**

Truth will always bear the light. Nothing is more helpful than finding the facts. And next to this nothing is more desirable than the dethronement of error. We can never find the truth except to our enrichment. We can never overthrow error except to our betterment. No truth can possibly be harmed by investigation. What we want, what we must have, is the truth of things. And for this reason: all truth leads to God; all error hides God. If God is at the centre of things, then truth uncovers Him. If God is at the heart of things, then error obscures Him. And when we find the facts, we find Him. This is the secret every man should strive to know.

“ Truth is large. Our aspiration
Scarce embraces half we be;
Shame to stand in His Creation,
And doubt Truth’s sufficiency:
To think God’s song unexcelling,
The poor tales of our own telling.”

Man has no greater friend than honest inquiry. All science is an effort to uncover the works of God. All true philosophy is an effort to find the ways of God. And the more we know of the works of God, and the better we are able to interpret the ways of God, the better it is for us.

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Now the honest doubter is the man who does not know, but who wants to know. And to this man Christianity comes with her invitation: "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether it be of men." And if we are honest, it is impossible for us to ignore this invitation; it is impossible for us to avoid this challenge. For Christianity asserts itself to be the most vital truth that man can know. "This is *life eternal* that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." If truth is desirable, then the Founder of Christianity challenges the truth-seeker, for He makes this announcement of Himself: "I am the Truth." This certainly is not an appeal to credulity. It is a challenge to knowledge. And this again is His pronouncement: "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" Christ calls for investigation. Christianity calls for inquiry. It demands that it be put to the proof. It asks for the light. "Come now, and let us reason together." This is its request. Let us take the matter up as rational creatures. Let us enter the lists as moral beings capable of acting upon our convictions.

III. CHRISTIANITY ONE OF THE MIGHTY FORCES OF THE WORLD

First and foremost among the phases of Christianity which call for investigation by the

honest doubter is this: Christianity is today, and for a long time has been, one of the mighty forces in the world. For eighteen hundred years it has been turning things upside down. It has crumbled empires and leveled thrones; it is revolutionary; it has made nations; it has moulded men by millions. Christianity is a mighty force. Christianity is a tremendous fact. Read the history of the ruling nations of the world today, and you read the history of Christianity. For it has been, and is, one of the strongest agencies at work among them. It is impossible to write the history of the United States and not write the history of Washington and the Revolutionary War. And it is impossible to write the history of civilization and not write the history of Christianity. If you would be an intelligent student of history, or philosophy, or of science, or of sociology, you must reckon with Christianity, you must know Christianity. For Christianity has had mightily to do with the making of the world.

IV. CHRISTIANITY DIVINE

Again, the honest doubter is met by this: Christianity claims to be divine. It claims to come from God, to be the message of Deity to humanity. This is its dictum: "Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts." "Which of you con-

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vinceth me of sin?" "To the law and to the testimony." Christianity claims to come from God. Christianity says of its laws, its doctrine, its kingdom, its life, its founders, that they are divine. Christ called for acceptance of himself as the Son of God on the ground that his words were the words of God; that his works were the works of God; that if this were not true, he was an imposter. And he called for investigation of his claim. And this is the matter that meets us today; this is the thing we want to know. Is Christianity from God? Was this man Jesus a worker of superhuman works? Did He rise from the dead? There is no question as to the historicity of Christianity. The question is, is Christianity supernatural? For we have passed the period when men say: "There is no God." Science and Scripture alike today class the men who so say with "the fool." For the Scriptures proceed, from Genesis to Revelation, upon the foundation that they are God's message to men. And more, the center round which the Scriptures revolve is the Christ. They begin with Him, and end with Him. And their claim is: He is God manifest in the flesh. And more, this Christ himself explicitly makes the claim again and again that He is the Son of God; that His character is divine; that His mission is of the Almighty. He claims divine authority, is

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clothed with divine power, works superhuman works, claims to be the Saviour of men, asserts absolute control of the human race, claims that He has come to give men divine life, eternal life, and claims that the destinies of men forever depend upon their relationships to Him.

Are these things so? Every man should know. Every honest doubter wants to know. There is only one honest attitude. Investigate the evidences.

V. CHRISTIANITY OF LIVING, PERSONAL MOMENT TO EVERY MAN

Again, the honest doubter is met by this: Christianity claims to be of living, personal moment to every man. Boldly, without qualification, it makes its great promise of eternal life to every man who wants it. "Whosoever will may come." "Him who cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." This is a personal matter. "We must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ." If we are in earnest, our attention is arrested here. We will not pass this by; to do so would be folly. We must investigate, for we cannot afford to neglect. Honest doubt seeks ever its own dismissal. Let us find the facts. Let us know these things whether they be of God. Let us define and determine our relationship to claims which are so

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vital and so personal. This is the attitude of the honest mind. "To the law and to the testimony." *How shall we begin?* How shall we deal with our doubt?

1. *Be in earnest.* Try conclusions. Accept evidences. Meet issues. Act upon results. Seek first things first. Let Jonah and his whale alone until you have found the God who made both Jonah and the fish. Put trifling aside. The search for God calls for the best intent of your being. No trifler succeeds even in temporal things. And even there the man most in earnest often fails. But no earnest, seeking spirit was ever denied at the throne of the Father.

2. *Be not afraid.* In the front rank of the scientists of the modern world stands Lord Kelvin. Hear him: "If you think strongly enough, you will be forced by science to the belief in God." "Science positively affirms creative power." Be not afraid. For every fact you find in the universe will be a foot-print of God. Then find your facts fearlessly; but face them honestly. *For the God of revelation is the God of nature.* And all the mysteries and difficulties that perplex and distress us are not confined to the natural sphere. They are found in the spiritual as well. But there is this in which the two are identical. In nature, and in revelation, God in his work, and God in

his Word, only facts are found. There is no falsehood; and there is no folly.

3. *Begin at the bottom.* Faith begins by giving up belief in Deity as a mere abstraction. Many people believe in God as they believe in the North pole. It is a possible something, located somewhere. And when they find it, it isn't there. That is the kind of belief about Deity that must be given up. In its stead must come a belief in "The Living God," who is "The Rewarder of them that seek Him." As the mariner believes in the Polar star not only because he sees it, but because he guides his course by it and beholds the whole heaven revolving about it, so is the living faith of this Christian and his God. This is the beginning. And what is the ending? It is this: "God hath made this same Jesus whom ye crucified both Lord and Christ." For this is the Scriptures; this is the law; this is the testimony; this is the prophets; and this is the revelation: "Thou art the Christ, the son of the Living God"; "The Son of God is come"; "God has spoken to us in his Son."

4. *Accept the evidence.* This is not a plea for the inspiration of the Scriptures. It is a matter of accepting the facts about the Christ, and the genuineness of the records is admitted. Their historicity is unimpeachable. Their authenticity is guaranteed by the char-

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acter of the men who wrote them. And what is the record? It is this and none other: "The Son of God is come." Judgment will follow. Are you an honest doubter? If so, you face this issue: "God hath sent his Son into the world."

CHAPTER II

IS THERE A GOD?

"The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him."

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE QUESTION

This is the profoundest problem that can lay hold of the human mind. Is there a supreme, personal intelligence? Is there a Creator who upholds and rules the universe? Is He a Father, gracious and merciful? Is the redemption of mankind accomplished through Him, and through none other? This question lies at the very foundation of all man's religious beliefs. Upon our answer to this depends our responsibility and our duty, our sin and our salvation, our immortality and our future estate. The question of a revelation, an incarnation, and a resurrection is dependent upon our answer to this question.

II. THE FIRST LINE OF APPROACH

There are three lines of approach. The first of these is intuition. The consciousness of God is race-wide. The belief in God is universal. There are no natural atheists. All are born

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with an indwelling sense of God. All men believe in the existence of some being or beings above them to whom they are responsible, and whom it behooves them to propitiate. This belief is not the result of argument. Most men have never faced the question why they believe in God. The wide-spread extent of this belief is a strong argument in favor of its truth. In the darkest night of paganism there are two innate convictions: one of these is of a divine birth, the other is of a sinful alienation. And these two are the causes of the universal unrest of the race.

There is but one way to invalidate this testimony, and that is to entertain the thought that the human race has been unanimous in entertaining a falsehood. This does not mean a mistake in interpretation. This is an entirely different matter. Such a mistake was the theory that the succession of light and darkness was caused by the sun going around the earth. The mistake was in the attempted interpretation,—not in the fact of the succession. If there is no succession, then our consciousness carries us to a lie. If it does so, then we have no foundation for any knowledge of any kind.

Hence the universal race-consciousness of the existence of God carries with it the same credibility as do all other facts of consciousness. And this credibility of the facts presented to us

in consciousness is the foundation of all our knowledge. Upon this science builds. Upon this philosophy asks for acceptance.

III. THE SECOND LINE OF APPROACH

The second line of approach is through the reason. By this line of approach we learn to know about God. What can we find that will teach us about God? There are three things.

1. *The first is the idea of cause.* It lies in the nature of our intellect. Where the mind finds an effect, the reason postulates a cause. We are so constituted that wherever any event occurs we are by necessity led to ask the reason for it. We necessarily believe that it was due to some cause. This is a fact in our mental constitution. Proceeding from it we follow two lines of thought.

a. *The work that has been wrought.* First, ourselves. We are here; we exist. Whence came we? It is impossible to believe that the human race is eternal, because we cannot think an endless chain. Our procession of thought necessitates a beginning. Hence the first man. And he must be either self-existent, or there must be a cause for his existence. How did he come into being? Take any species of animal life. The same reasoning reaches the same conclusion. What is the cause of their existence?

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Reasoning necessitates the conclusion of the existence of a self-existing First Cause. The theory of evolution affords no help. Go back to an original ether. It is either in motion or at rest. If it is in motion, the motion is a change that demands a cause. We cannot conceive an infinite series of finite causes. Neither can we conceive that matter is the originator of motion. This is Plato's argument. Since it is impossible for the mind to conceive of matter originating motion there must be a mind as the first cause of motion.

And to this position, reached by Plato so long ago, the new science of our day has at last come. Science today confesses that the universe had a beginning. As the researches of men have gone deeper into the structure of the earth, and into the nature of the universe about us, all doubt has been removed. Astronomy and geology unite to proclaim that Plato was right. And long before both, the sweet singer of Israel told the same story: "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth His handiwork."

With the sinking of the evening sun your copy of the daily press is left at your door. When the dinner hour is over you read it through. The next morning you seek the office. Finding the manager, you put this question to him: "Where did that paper you sent me

last night come from? I found in it about everything that had happened in the world during the last twenty-four hours. And besides, I found opinions and interpretations of many of the most important things: I found announcements of where I might buy nearly everything that I and my family would need to keep them living for a year. And all this was orderly and systematically arranged. How did all those things happen to fall together in just that way in a single day?"

He would take you for a lunatic. He would beat a retreat before the impossible problem of ever driving into your brain the explanation of the editor-in-chief and the staff and the business management, of the press association reaching its lines around the world, of the linotype and the printing press. How did it happen? The very suggestion is an intolerable insult to human intelligence.

And how much deeper and vaster is the meaning behind the lines of Addison:

"The spacious firmament on high,
And all the blue, ethereal sky,
And spangled heavens, a shining frame,
Their great Original proclaim."

b. *The manner of the work.* For everywhere the work shows evidence of design. What do we mean by design? We mean the

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selection of an end to be attained ; the choice of a suitable means for its attainment ; the application of the means for the accomplishment of the proposed end.

It is not necessary to add, therefore, that design is indicative of intelligence, will and power. The argument is thus presented by Philo: "No work of art is self-made. The world is the most perfect work of art. Therefore the world was made by a good and most perfect author."

The instances of design are numberless. The eye is fitted for seeing; the ear for hearing; the lungs for breathing; the teeth for mastication; the stomach for digestion; the limbs for locomotion; the joints for flexure. And each organ is arranged and adjusted with reference to every other organ.

Again, organs common to all are modified to suit the necessities of different species. Birds which wade in the water have long legs and long necks; birds which float on the surface have webbed feet; birds which fly have hollow bones.

Again, there is a correspondence between the organs of every animal and the instincts by which it is endowed. The bee has an instinct to build cells. Its body secretes wax. The spider has an instinct to spin webs. Its body is furnished with the requisite matter. Organs and instinct correspond.

Equally marvelous are the same evidences throughout the vegetable kingdom. And this more marvelous still; that the vegetable is fitted to supply nourishment to the animal.

And more marvelous still, the adaptations of external nature to minister to the necessities of animal and vegetable life. For neither plants nor animals could exist without light, air, heat, water and soil. Who created the light and the heat and the air? And who perfected and adjusted the relationships? And how is it that the whole animal and vegetable world has been constructed on one comprehensive plan? And how is it that the earth has been so evidently designed for man?

And when we turn our thoughts to the universe, order and symmetry are seen on a scale so vast that the evidence is overwhelming. In our own system the planet Neptune swings around his majestic orbit without the variation of a second in a thousand years.

But astronomers tell us that they know of a hundred million suns. And beside some of them, at least, ours is a pygmy. Sirius shines with a light equal to two hundred and fifty of our suns, and Alcyone shines with a light of twelve thousand suns. The nearest of these suns is separated from the outer planet of our system by twenty-one billions of miles. Besides these systems there are others in which suns re-

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volve around suns, at distances proportioned to their magnitude.

Throughout this vast universe order reigns. The variety is endless; the unity is one; the same laws of gravitation, of light, of heat, everywhere prevail. Order is the sure indication of mind. Is a book made by a mass of type falling together in the form of words and sentences and paragraphs and chapters, the whole producing an order and a sequence of thought?

2. The second is our moral nature. This manifests itself in our ideas of right and wrong. Some actions we say to be right; others we say to be wrong. And this is not because one pleases us, and the other displeases us. The moral quality of a word or an action we know to be something altogether different from the feeling of pleasure or displeasure which it occasions. For we are conscious, when we say of a word or an act that it is wrong, of appealing to an absolute standard. Our judgment is simply a statement that the word or the act lacks conformity to this standard. What is that standard? It is found in a perfect moral being whose nature constitutes the ground of right.

Again, we are conscious that morality is obligatory. We cannot escape this. There are some things we ought to do. It is not a ques-

tion of expediency; it is not a matter of policy. There is a chasm wide and deep between these two sayings: "Honesty is the best policy," and "You must be honest." And the obligation of the latter is upon us. Whence comes it? Who imposes it? Who lays it upon us? Whence is this imperative? Either it proceeds from Deity, or our nature is a lie and our consciousness confesses falsehood.

3. The third is the Scriptures. We have the right to presume that if there is a God anywhere in the universe, He will not leave us hopelessly in the dark; but that somewhere, somehow, He will discover Himself. To say that He cannot do this is to negative the idea of Deity; and to say that He will not do this is to negative the morality of Deity. If there be a living God, He has made Himself known. And here is the Book that tells the story. Of all the books in the literature of the ages it is the only one that claims to have been "written by holy men as they were moved by the Spirit of God." It opens with the words: "In the beginning, God." It affirms that the universe had its origin in the creative power of God. It affirms that everything is sustained by the providence of God.

Now, a great deal of our knowledge rests upon the testimony of others. If the testimony of travelers is enough to satisfy us as to the

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appearance and habits of men in the heart of Africa whom we have never seen, the Bible, if it is authentic, ought to satisfy as to the existence of God. For it is the narrative of His dealings with the race. If we do not accept its testimony, we might as well burn our books of history.

But what is this book that boldly asserts God and his relations with man? For one thing it is the source of the law of the civilized world. For every just law since Sinai has its root in Moses' law. For another thing, it is the source of the morality of the civilized world. And the world confesses that the moral standards of the Bible are right. And shall not such a book speak the truth? And what is its word? "In the beginning, God."

Surveying the road we have come, we find that we have looked into our consciousness, and there we have found the fact that we are conscious of God. Our intuition tells us of God.

Turning to the reason, we have traveled three pathways. The first of these was from the effect to the cause; the second was from the design to the designer; the third was from the testimony of the Scriptures to the reality certified there.

Our intuition gives us a consciousness of God. Our reason tells us about God. But there is another line of approach, and by this we shall

learn to know God. The difference is deep and wide.

IV. THE THIRD LINE OF APPROACH

For here we are met by Christ. And this is his message: "The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." Pause for a moment and think upon that statement. No other man ever said it. None ever dared. Only one man could say it, and He must be the Son of God. But if the Son of God said it, shall we dare do otherwise than believe Him? Shall we dare deny Him? And if we dare not deny Him, we must accept Him. And this is his testimony: "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

What more? Could there be any thing more? Is not this the God we want? Is not this the God our hearts cry out for? Is not this the testimony our ears rejoice to hear? Is not this the message our hearts leap forth to know?

Oh, what an Evangel! The soul of man is like a sheep lost on the mountains. And the shepherd goes forth, and tarries not through the darkness of the night until he finds it.

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“ And there is joy in the presence of the angels of God.”

Oh, what a gospel! This is our salvation: a seeking, suffering, travailing, sin-bearing God: A Christ, a Saviour, who paused not at Gethsemane nor drew back from Calvary if so be the world might be reconciled to God.

Oh, what a salvation! Deliverance from sin; victory over death; triumph over the grave. “ And the end, everlasting life.” What more can desire seek? What more can aspiration hope? What more can the soul know?

Oh, what a price to pay! For He died that we might live. “ He was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification.” One winter night when the snow lay deep and winds blew cold, over the hills of the highlands, the shepherd missed three lambs from the fold. The faithful collie lay stretched by the fire, feeding her young. The master opened the door upon the bitter night and raised three fingers, and said, “ Go,” and the seeker went and one was brought home. Again the master opened the door and raised two fingers and said, “ Go,” and the seeker went over the lonely hills and another was brought home. Again the master opened the door and raised one finger, and said, “ Go,” and again the seeker rose and went forth, facing the wintry blast and treading the cold snow and searching the

weary wastes until the last one was safe within the fold. But when the morning came a cold, dead form lay silent and still, stretched beside the hearth. But the lambs were safe within the fold.

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

CHAPTER III

WHAT ARE THE SCRIPTURES?

The word "Bible" is from the Greek word "Biblia," meaning a roll or scroll. That was the ancient form of a book made from the inner bark of the papyrus, or from parchment.

I. THE WRITING OF THIS BOOK

In some of its parts it is by far the most ancient record that we have; but nearly twenty centuries separate these parts from those written last. And this is matched by the variety of the writers. For sovereign and slave, prince and peasant, scholar and novice, learned and unlearned, contributed to its pages. And this again by the conditions under which the writers performed their work. Some were rich, some were poor, some lived at courts, some lived in poverty, some wrote of the present, some of the past, some of the limitless future, all going on record as to things fundamental between Deity and humanity, and the final realities of human existence.

And yet the harmony is one, and the object

WHAT ARE THE SCRIPTURES? 25

is one, and the central thought is one, and the theme is one, and the central Personage is one, and the system of truth and duty found in all the pages is one.

Whence this unity in multiplicity?

Whence this harmony in variety?

Whence this consistency in diversity?

The Bible is itself a miracle, unaccountable save as the hand of Deity is seen on its pages.

II. THE BIBLE AND THE HEBREWS

Fifteen hundred years before Christ Moses wrote the first books. He was the creator of the legislation of the Hebrew race. And every just law written since his day has its roots in the law written by this Hebrew law-giver. The Jews assert that he wrote the Pentateuch. The scholarship of the world, after keenest research, is almost unanimous in the same verdict. And to this is added the endorsement of Christ, for He said: "If ye believe not Moses' writings, how shall ye believe my words?" Then others wrote — Joshua and Samuel and David and Isaiah. Of all these writings the Jews were the guardians, and they performed their task well. Every word must be pronounced aloud by the copyist before it was written; and before writing the name of God he must wash his pen. All completed copy must be examined for approval or rejection within thirty days.

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These things are evidence to one fact,—the great and scrupulous care exercised by the Jews in the preservation of the books they held sacred. And this is the more surprising when we remember that these same records tell the story of their own condemnation by Jehovah as a nation for faithlessness and idolatry and infidelity and ingratitude.

The New Testament was written within the first century. Three ancient manuscripts are in existence: one written in the fifth century, now in the British Museum; one written in the fourth century, now in the Vatican at Rome; one in St. Petersburg. Is this good witness? Tischendorf says: “No simple work of ancient Greek classical literature can command three such original witnesses as the Sinaitic, Vatican, and Alexandrine manuscripts to the integrity and accuracy of its text.”

And this is the result — a book, written while fifteen hundred years were multiplying, by every kind of author, under every variety of circumstance, but its accuracy certified by almost infallible proofs, and in our possession across the distant reaches of three thousand years.

III. THE BIBLE AND HISTORY

The history contained in the Bible is the history of time. For it antedates the beginning of the race, and goes back to the birth of

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the world. Crossing the centuries, it records the creation of man. For a while it tells the story of the whole race, then it confines itself to the story of the children of Israel, widening again to the race in redemption; and then, in the far reaches of prophecy, it touches the end of things temporal, portrays the final scenes of earth, the gathering before the Judge eternal, and the issues of destiny.

Who is sufficient for such themes? Come forward, O man, whoever thou mayest be, with mind that comprehends the divine thought of the centuries and the issues of the generations of man, and read the record ere the scenes are enacted, and tell the story ere the scroll is unrolled.

IV. THE BIBLE AND PROPHECY

First, prophecies regarding the Jews. Leviticus 26, Deuteronomy 28, the gospel by St. Luke 21: 24, and many passages more, have been and are being fulfilled with literal exactness.

Second, prophecies regarding the Messiah. Isaiah 53, Micah 5:2, Daniel 9:25-27, passed in exact review 1900 years ago as they had been written centuries before.

Third, prophecies regarding cities and kingdoms. There is a twice-told tale. For you may read it first in the sacred Word, and you

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may read it again in history. The first was written centuries before the events described; the second was written when the work was done. And the record is the same. Go read it on the pages of Scripture — and then go read it again in the barrenness of Tyre, the desolation of Sidon, the decline and degradation of Egypt, the waste of Idumea, the demolition of Babylon, the silent plains of Chaldea, the barren wastes of Galilee, and the silenced songs of Zion where once the Temple crowned Moriah's Mount.

V. THE BIBLE AND LITERATURE

Do we want logic? Read Paul.

Are we moved by the sublime? The passing passages of all literature are found in Isaiah, and Job, and Psalms, and Revelation.

Do we love narrative? None so rich and rare and beautiful and simple in its telling as the Pentateuch and the gospels.

Do we like the pithy and the pungent? The Proverbs of Solomon easily surpass.

Voltaire said of the Book of Ruth that as a story of filial affection and devotion it has no equal anywhere.

Does our heart leap forth with the spirit of the bold and of the impetuous? Follow Peter as his spirit takes wing and his thought sweeps in the eternities.

Do the billows of the world's wild passions

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roar about us, and are our hearts driven by tempests of sorrow? We may find a harbor in the land-locked seas of trust, and faith, and peace where the beloved disciple keeps the company of his risen and glorified Redeemer.

All literature is here: national anthems, war ballads, pilgrim songs, history, argument, simplicity, sublimity, beauty, passion, peace, sorrow, song, tears, story, vision — all are here.

In lyric poetry the Hebrew leads the literature of the world. Examples range from the Songs of Deborah, and Israel's triumph by the Red Sea, to the deep spiritual meditations of the 139th Psalm.

O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me.
Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising;
thou understandest my thought afar off.

Thou searchest out my path and my lying down,
and art acquainted with all my ways.

For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo,
O Lord, thou knowest it altogether.

Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid
thy hand upon me.

Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is
high, I cannot attain unto it.

Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither
shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up
into heaven, thou art there:

If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, thou art
there.



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If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell
in the uttermost parts of the sea;

Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right
hand shall hold me.

If I say, Surely the darkness shall overwhelm
me, and the light about me shall be night;

Even the darkness hideth not from thee,

But the night shineth as the day:

The darkness and the light are both alike to
thee.

How precious also are thy thoughts unto me,
O God!

How great is the sum of them!

If I should count them, they are more in number
than the sand:

When I awake, I am still with thee.

Match the story of Joseph for poetic justice;
the story of David and Saul for adventure; the
story of Ruth for exquisite beauty; the book
of Esther for exciting fiction.

The philosophy of a whole nation is here;
oratory reaches its climax in Deuteronomy; and
in the department of prophecy the Bible stands
alone.

May we look at some examples?

Would we study biography? Here is the
“greatest soul of all the sons of men.” Says
Theodore Parker:

“Blessed be God that so much manliness has
been lived out, and stands there yet, a lasting

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monument to mark how high the tides of divine life have risen in the world."

Do we love the vivid in description? Here it is — the thunder-storm, and Jehovah in it. "The voice of the Lord is on the sea; the God of glory thundereth; the Lord is on the mighty sea. The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty. The voice of the Lord breaketh the cedars; yea, the Lord breaketh the cedars of Lebanon. The voice of the Lord divideth the flames of fire. The voice of the Lord shaketh the wilderness. The Lord sitteth upon the flood; yea, the Lord sitteth King forever." Psalm 29.

Are we moved by the sublime? Read Jehovah's answer in Job 38: "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened, and who laid the cornerstone thereof, when the stars of the morning sang together and all the sons of God sang for joy? Or who shut up the sea with doors in its gushing forth when it issued from the womb? When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddling-band for it? When I brake upon it my law, and set bars and doors and said: 'Hitherto shalt thou come and no farther, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed'? Hast thou commanded the morning? Hast thou caused the dawn to know its place?

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Where is the way where light dwelleth? Who hast divided a water-course for the overflowing of waters, or a way for the lightning of thunder? Hath the rain a father? Or who hath begotten the drops of dew?"

And in song and in hymn the Hebrew passes to the first place among mortals. All other lips are silent beside those of Ruth when she clothes the sentiments of tender fidelity and unswerving loyalty in the immortal words: "Entreat me not to leave thee, nor to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest, I will go, and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God; where thou diest I will die, and there will I be buried. The Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me."

All other narrative pales in naturalness and simplicity beside the parable of the prodigal son.

Love is higher than the mountains, deeper than the seas, radiant as the morning, beautiful as the moonbeam upon the mountains, strong as the king of day at noon, mysterious as the midnight enfolding the world. But the poets of Greece, and the singers of Italy, and the heroes of the earth have failed to free this imprisoned bird of Paradise. Paul picks up his brush and lo, we see the shining glories of his wings: "Love suffereth long, and is kind.

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Love enviieth not, vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Love never faileth."

May we look at some results?

Here have the great artists of all time found their inspiration. Here have the poets whose names will never die drunk at a never-failing fountain. Here orators have seen visions. Here sages have dreamed dreams. Here human thought transcends itself. Here the ideal takes precedence of the real. Here the sublime is clothed with immortal vesture.

Coleridge said: "To give the history of the Bible as a book would be little else than to relate the origin or first excitement of all the literature we possess. From this storehouse of literary materials our leading writers have most freely drawn."

Macaulay said: "The English Bible — a book which, if everything else in our language should perish, would alone suffice to show the whole extent of its beauty and power."

Spenser's "Faery Queen" is drawn from the Bible as to its material, and also it finds its inspiration there.

Shakespeare alludes to the Bible in at least thirty-seven of his plays. To understand the

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allusions to the Bible in the "Merchant of Venice" one must be familiar with Genesis 16:25; 27:30; Deuteronomy 27; Psalm 119; Proverbs 30; Daniel; Matthew 5:6; 8:9; Luke 17; and Hebrews 11.

Pope's "Messiah" is drawn from Isaiah.

Cowper studied the Bible constantly. His best work is the "Task." Its highest strains are expansions from Isaiah.

Milton's "Paradise Lost" was inspired by the Bible, and is saturated with it.

The Bible was one of the four books that always lay on Byron's table. In his work "Darkness" he drew from the prophecies of Jeremiah.

Browning in his "Easter-Day," and in "Christmas-Eve" has one hundred and thirty allusions to the Bible. In "The Ring and the Book" there are over five hundred allusions.

Shelley drew some of the finest passages in his "Queen Mab" from the Scriptures.

Bryant's "Thanatopsis" finds its basis in Job.

Wordsworth says, "The grand storehouse of enthusiastic and meditative imagination is the prophetic and lyrical parts of the Holy Scriptures." His "Ode to Immortality" is drawn from Romans 8, and from I Corinthians 15.

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Tennyson in his poems refers to Scripture over four hundred times.

Edmund Burke, the peerless English statesman and orator, made it his habit to read a chapter from Isaiah before every speech that he made in the House of Commons.

Daniel Webster said: "If there is aught of eloquence in me, it is because I learned the Scriptures at my mother's knee."

John Ruskin said that if there was aught that was worthy in his style, it was because his mother taught him the Psalms when but a little child.

As an awakener of thought the Bible stands first. At least sixty thousand books have been written about it alone.

Hall Caine said: "I think that I know my Bible as few literary men know it. There is no book in the world like it, and the finest novels ever written fall far short in interest of any of the stories it tells. Whatever strong situations I have in my book are not of my own creation, but are taken from the Bible."

"The Deemster" is the story of the prodigal son. "The Bondsman" is the story of Esau and Jacob. "The Scapegoat" is the story of Eli and his son. And "The Manxman" is the story of David and Uriah.

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VI. THE BIBLE AND MORALS

Two flags are nailed to the mast: "Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart"; "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Under these shall the Christian sail. To these shall he be true. Nothing less than these will do. Nothing more than these is needed. Who is thy God? The Holy One of Israel. Who is thy neighbor? Humanity. And if the Bible had its way, all swords would be beaten into ploughshares, and all spears into pruning hooks, and every shackle would fall from every slave, and every yoke would break from every bondman, and injustice would give way to love, and hatred would give way to brotherhood, and the law of life would be the law of mutual helpfulness, and every relation between man and his fellowman would promote a meaning divine.

When Egypt was the seat of the highest learning and the first culture in the world men worshipped beasts. When Greece was the seat of the world's noblest philosophy men worshipped Venus, a personification of lust. When Roman law reached the zenith of its triumphs Roman morals were wallowing in the mire.

But wherever the Bible has touched the lives of the children of men, there schools have been

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opened; barbarism has become civilization; savages have become saints; vice has become virtue; manhood has been emancipated; woman has been freed; hymns have been sung; and churches have become centers of liberty.

Garibaldi said: "It is the Bible that has freed Italy."

France once set up a republic that tore the Bible from its throne. The Book was tied to the tail of an ass, and dragged in contempt through the streets. A public prostitute was placed upon the altar and worshipped as the goddess of reason.

And Lamartine wrote: "The republic without God was quickly stranded. Though they wrote upon their standard liberty, equality and fraternity, the liberty was license; the equality was lawlessness; the fraternity was a riot of bloodshed."

These, too, are the watchwords of the Evangel of the Christ. But here their meaning widens as the receding horizon, and deepens as the soundless seas. For the liberty is the liberty of the children of God; and the equality is the equality of brotherhood; and the fraternity is the fraternity of love.

VII. THE BIBLE AND ITS AUTHOR

Who wrote this book? Let us interrogate and see. Did bad men write it? Then the

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best thing that the earth holds was conceived in a falsehood, born of a fraud, and cradled in a lie. And the hands of the men that held the pen wrote the most terrible condemnation of their own act in writing.

Did good men write it? Then they wrote with a lie on their lips. Their hypocrisy was studied, continuous, complete, damnable. For this is their ever-repeated asseveration: "Thus saith the Lord." And as poets, prophets, law-givers, seers and sages, these men stand among men without peer.

What is this Book — written in three continents, Europe, Asia and Africa? Written in three languages, Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek? Written by thirty-six authors among whom were poets, scholars, fishermen, physicians, seers, business men, judges, shepherds, jurists, prophets, kings.

What is this Book — that does not attempt to prove immortality, but publishes it? That does not argue eternal life, but reveals it? This Book of which it has been well said: "The sun never sets on its gleaming page. It goes equally to the cottage of the plain man, and the palace of the king. It is woven into the literature of the scholar, and colors the talk of the street. It enters into men's closets, mingles in all the grief and cheerfulness of life. It blesses us when we are born, and is with us

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at our bridals and burials. The aching head finds a softer pillow when the Bible lies underneath. It tempers our grief to finer issues. It lifts man above himself. The timid man looking through the glass of Scripture does not fear to stand alone, to tread the way unknown and distant, to take the death-angel by the hand, and to bid farewell to wife and babes and home. Men rest on it their dearest hopes. It tells them of God, and of his blessed Son; of earthly duties, and of heavenly rest."

CHAPTER IV

IS CHRIST THE SON OF GOD?

“He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.”

I. JESUS CHRIST NOT A MAN

“I know men, and I tell you that Jesus is not a man. Everything in him amazes me. His spirit outreaches mine, and his will confounds me. Comparison is impossible between him and any other being in the world. He is truly a being by himself. His ideas and his sentiments, the truth that he announces, his manner of convincing, are all beyond humanity and the natural order of things. His birth and the story of his life; the profoundness of his doctrine, which overturns all difficulties and is their most complete solution; his gospel, the singularity of his mysterious being; his appearance; his empire; his progress through all countries and kingdoms — all this is to me a prodigy, an unfathomable mystery. I see nothing here of man. Near as I may approach, closely as I may examine, all remains above my comprehension — great with a greatness that crushes me. It is in vain that I re-

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flect — all remains unaccountable. Thus did Napoleon express himself about Jesus Christ.

The Incarnation, Deity within humanity — the thought has ever staggered the unspiritual mind. This is the central and amazing assertion of Christianity. This is overwhelming presumption to the sceptic. That the great God, the Creator of the ends of the earth, would wear the robes of humanity, and assume the garments of the clay, would manifest himself in the form of the flesh — this passes belief, this is incredible.

And like the men in the days of old, they ask for proof. But Jesus did not come to bring proofs of the Incarnation. He was the Incarnation. He was not a proof. He was the manifestation. An apple tree does not present proofs of itself. It is an apple tree. Jesus did not come to prove God. He came to manifest God. He did not bring statements and signs. He bore the marks of Deity. The evidences were upon him.

There are two leading conceptions of Jesus Christ abroad in the world today. One, that He was what He proclaimed himself, the Son of God. The other that He was the world's greatest Teacher. But the latter of these He could not be. For if He were not the former, He was either a dupe or a liar. Thus said the Jews. They needed no interpreter. They

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knew. And this was their verdict: "For a good work we stone thee not. But because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God." And this was their accusation to Pilate: "We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God." Thus said the Jews who knew him, reasoned with him, accused him, and crucified him for blasphemy, "because he made himself the Son of God." Now, either he or they were right. If he was right, he was the Son of God. If they were right, they were bound by their law to put him to death.

May we turn to a study of the testimony:

II. JESUS CHRIST EQUAL WITH GOD

Jesus Christ made the claim that he was equal with God. For he said: "I and my Father are one." "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." "That ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins, I say unto thee, arise." "Have I been so long time with thee, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father, and how sayest thou then, show us the Father?"

Can you explain these statements on any other ground than that Christ is equal with God? As said above, this was the Jews' understanding of him, and this was why they took up

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stones to stone him. And notice, Jesus did not tell them that they had misunderstood him. Instead he accepted their interpretation of his claims.

For he made these claims. And he substantiated them by his character, and his works. To these he appealed: "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" "Believe in me for the very works' sake." Can we believe that he was a deceiver? And claimed to be what he was not? Or can we believe that God would enable him to work miracles in support of a falsehood?

III. THE NEW TESTAMENT PRESENTS JESUS CHRIST AS GOD

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us."—Jno. 1.

"And Thomas answered and said unto him, my Lord and my God."—Jno. 20:28.

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."—Acts 20:28.

"Of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever."—Rom. 9:5.

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“Great is the mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh.”—I Tim. 3:16.

“This (person, Jesus Christ) is the true God and eternal life.”—I Jno. 5:20.

“Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.”—Titus 2:3.

IV. JESUS CHRIST AS GOD MANIFEST IN THE FLESH

May we turn to a brief and systematic study of the presentation of Jesus Christ in the Scriptures as God manifest in the flesh:

First, the names in Scripture that imply Deity, and that are applied to Jesus Christ.

1. “The Son of God.” This name implies divinity. “Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he had not only broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.” Thus the Jews understood him. Thus his disciples understood him.

2. “The only begotten Son.” Five times this is found. It does not mean that Jesus is the Son of God in the same sense that all men are sons of God. For Jesus himself gives it another interpretation. He says, “Having yet therefore One Son, His well-beloved, He sent Him also last unto them, saying, ‘They will reverence My Son.’” Here the distinction is

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drawn by Jesus Himself, between the prophets as servants and Himself as Son.

3. "The First and the Last."—Rev. 11:17. This is a divine name. In Isaiah 44:6 it appears thus, "Thus saith Jehovah, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, Jehovah of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and besides me there is no God."

4. "The Alpha and the Omega." "The Beginning and the Ending." These are applied to Jesus Christ in Rev. 22:12, 13, 16. And in Rev. 1:8 they are applied to the Lord our God.

5. "The Holy One."—Acts 3:14. But in many passages in the Old Testament this name is applied to Jehovah.

6. "The Lord." This name appears hundreds of times as applied to Jesus Christ.

Other names are:

"Lord of all."—Acts 10:36.

"The Lord of Glory."—I Cor. 2:8.

"The Mighty God."—Isa. 9:6.

"God." In Heb. 1:8, we read, "But of the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever."

"God with us."—Matt. 1:23.

"Our Great God."—Titus 2:13.

"God blessed forever."—Rom. 9:5.

Second, divine attributes are ascribed to Jesus Christ.

He had power over disease, and sin, and

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death. He had power over the winds and the sea. He had power over angels, and demons, and men.

We are taught that he knew the thoughts of men, and the secrets of their hearts. We are taught that he knew the future. Over the destinies hidden within it, he claimed that he would preside. We are told that in Him "are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

We are taught that He is from eternity. "The same was in the beginning with God."

We are taught that before His incarnation, He was in the form of God.— Phil. 2: 6.

And again Paul declares that "In Him dwelt all the fullness of the God-head bodily."— Col. 2: 9.

Third, divine offices are predicated of Jesus Christ.

He is the Creator.— Jno. 1: 3. Col. 1: 16.
Heb. 1: 10.

He forgives sin.— Luke 7: 48.

He raises the dead.— Jno. 6: 39-44.

He is the judge of the living and the dead.—
II Tim. 4: 1.

Of this He Himself says, "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son. That all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son, honoreth not the Father who hath sent Him."— Jno. 5: 22, 23.

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He bestows eternal life.— Jno. 10:28; 17:2.

Fourth, the Scriptures teach that divine worship is to be offered to Jesus Christ. Two of these references are:

“And again, when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship Him.”— Heb. 1:6.

“That at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

These passages teach and assert directly the deity of Jesus Christ. But other references in the Psalms, and in the prophets are in point. There he is called the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. He is the image of the invisible God. He is omnipresent and omniscient. He is to be honored even as we honor the Father. His actions are divine actions. His attributes are divine attributes. He is before all things. He is the Creator of all things. If the Scriptures stand as the infallible rule of faith, the deity of Jesus Christ is placed beyond dispute.

This opens the way for the objection to be raised here of the incomprehensibility of the mystery of the Trinity. Of course it is a mystery. Of course it is incomprehensible. But should the creature who cannot even under-

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stand how the food he eats nourishes the body he lives in, reject the Trinity of Deity because it passes his understanding?

V. BASIS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

The entire New Testament is based upon the assumption that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

This is by far the most impressive proof of the deity of Jesus Christ, and also, by far the most difficult to present. Go to the edge of the forest. Gather a few sticks beneath the trees. Throw them into a pile and set fire to them. That is easy proof that they are concentrated sunshine. But the impressive fact is that the whole forest is concentrated sunshine.

Now, the deity of Jesus Christ is in the New Testament as the sunshine is in the forest. The forest is the sunshine robing itself, and showing itself in garments of clay. And Jesus Christ in the New Testament is Deity transformed, Deity robing itself and showing itself through the garments of human life.

And notice, had there been no sunshine there would have been no forest. And had there been no Jesus Christ, the Son of God, there would have been no New Testament. Of course there might have been a little biography of Jesus the Jew.

Take all the wood which shows sunshine in it

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out of the forest, and you have no forest left. And take everything out of the New Testament that shows Jesus Christ the Son of God in it, and you have no New Testament left.

May we look for a moment at one or two instances where the New Testament proceeds upon the assumption of the Deity of Jéšus Christ; One of the most suggestive is his relationship to the angels. Speaking of himself, he says: "The Son of Man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that cause stumbling and those that do iniquity, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire."— Matt. 13: 41.

Again he says: "The Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father with *His* angels, and then shall *He* reward every man according to his deeds."— Matt. 16: 27.

Again he says: "The Son of Man shall send forth *His* angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together *His* elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."— Matt. 24: 31.

Again he says: "The Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, and before Him shall be gathered all nations. And He shall separate them one from another."

Who is the Son of Man at whose bidding angels speed; in whose hands are the issues of

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life and death; at whose direction angels separate men?

Another most suggestive example in his attitude toward sinful men. This he identifies with the attitude of heaven. There are three parables in the fifteenth chapter of St. Luke. In each of these Jesus portrays the sinner coming home. And in each instance he indicates the attitude of heaven, thus: "There is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth." Now his purpose in these parables was this: the justification of his own attitude toward sinners, and his own action in seeking the lost. And he does it on this ground: it is the attitude and the action of heaven toward the sinful man. He identifies heaven with himself. He unveils the transaction in its real nature. This is his way, because it is heaven's way. The lost are received by him as they are received by heaven. And the part of the Good Shepherd is assumed as his own.

VI. THE REVOLUTION WROUGHT IN THE WORLD

There is another testimony. It is this: The revolution wrought in the world.

This is the plainest of all. This is the most easily seen. It is like the mountain in the landscape. Christianity is itself the most convincing proof that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

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Nearly two thousand years ago the conquests of the Christ began. With every generation they have been repeated. For though Christianity widens at the horizons, the generations at their beginnings are unchanged. Christianity must re-conquer the world to itself in each generation.

And the force remains unspent. The fires of love burn on. Never so many martyrs baptized in their own blood. Never so many missionaries counting all things but loss for Christ. Never so much wealth laid at the foot of the Cross. Never so much energy, so much organized effort, so much intelligence, so much ability, so much consecration to the cause of Christianity as there is today. Is it all because a Jewish peasant was properly put to death 1900 years ago for blasphemy? Or is it grandly true as Montgomery sings:

“ Hail to the Lord’s Anointed,
Great David’s greater Son;
Hail in the time appointed
His reign on earth begun.
He comes to break oppression
To set the captive free;
To take away transgression,
And rule in equity.”

“ He shall come down like showers
Upon the fruitful earth,
And joy and hope, like flowers,

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Spring in His path to birth;
Before Him on the mountains,
Shall peace, the herald, go;
And righteousness in fountains,
From hill to valley flow."

VII. THE REVOLUTION WROUGHT IN THE HUMAN HEART

There is another testimony: The revolution wrought in the human heart.

It is the testimony of experience. We believe the sight of our eyes. We trust the touch of our fingers. We accept the hearing of our ears. But philosophy is builded upon the presumption that we accept the facts of consciousness. So, too, does Christianity appeal to the facts of experience. Shall we be guilty of the slander upon ourselves that a man may know that his body needs bread, but he may not know that he loves his child? Does physical experience tell the truth, and spiritual experience utter lies? Shall a man believe the touch of his fingers, but reject the noblest experiences that arise within him? Shall a physical fact be presented in consciousness — namely, that stones are hard — and shall the validity of the same pass unquestioned; and shall a spiritual fact, as a mother's love for her child, be presented in consciousness, and the validity of the same be denied? This is to say that one-half our nature

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tells the truth, and the other half utters lies.
It is to contradict all philosophy.

For the testimony of the Christian, arising in his own experience, and welling within his own breast, and flowing as a fountain within his own heart, and transforming all his being, as the waters transform the desert — this is the witness to Jesus Christ, the Son of God. This is the supreme proof. And the lives of such men in Christendom, answering the call of the noble, and the righteous, and the gentle, and the loving — these are the unanswerable testimony to the present power of Him from whom the strength so to live is drawn. As a man knows he loves his mother, as a man knows he loves his country, as a mother knows she loves her child, so the Christian knows Christ within, the hope of glory. For “The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.” And the Christian sings in the joy of his heart:

“ My God is reconciled,
His pardoning voice I hear;
He owns me for his child,
I can no longer fear;
With confidence I now draw nigh,
And Father, Abba, Father cry.”

CHAPTER V

THE REALITY OF CHRISTIANITY

"But we preach Christ and Him crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness, but to them which believe, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God."

I. GENUINENESS OF CHRISTIANITY INDICATED BY ITS EXCELLENCE

The most beautiful thing in the world is sunlight, but its birth-place is in the resplendent sun. And only the sun could give birth to such a marvelously beautiful, transcendent, productive power as is the subtle, pervasive, transforming force we call the sunlight. And the gospel of the Son of God was born from above. Its birth-place was the bosom of God. The power that redeems men, that regenerates men, that transforms men, that recreates men, was generated by God. It proceeds from Deity. It is not made by man, nor conceived by man, nor generated by man. No more than the earth could give birth to the sunshine that is the secret of its own redemption could man bring forth the power that would accomplish his own re-creation, that transforms him from the

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creature of self-condemnation, staggering under the weight of his transgression, to the child of light and liberty and love, conscious and convinced that he has been ransomed and justified, and one day will be glorified, when love divine shall have come to full fruition in his soul.

As the sunlight stands alone as the one unique, creative, transforming power found upon the earth, so is Christianity among men. As the sunlight carries in its train all growth, all fruitage, all harvest, all beauty of flower and field and forest, so Christianity carries within it all beauty of heart, all nobleness of soul, all strength of spirit.

The roots of the rose are found in the soil, but the hand that holds the brush that paints the matchless beauty of its petals is found in the sun. And the body of man is formed of the dust and the clay, but the Hand that re-creates him in the image of the Eternal is found in the heavens. It cometh from above. This is Christianity,— the thought and life and love of Infinity pulsing and throbbing and thrilling through the life of humanity.

II. REALITY OF CHRISTIANITY INDICATED BY ITS ORIGIN

It was not in the mind of man. Its aim is the rescue of the race itself. Its object is de-

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liverance from sin, and ransom from death, and the enduement of a new life-power transcending destruction and reaching unto righteousness and immortality. Its goal is the re-creation of the children of the clay to become the children of God. Its process is the incarnation of the divine within the human to the end that the human shall become partakers of the divine, and shall share in the estate of goodness which is the abode of Deity. And this conception never had its origin in the brain of philosopher, or poet, or prophet, or seer: it was born in the bosom of Deity. It is the thought of Infinity. Men do not compose pieces of fiction for the purpose of the forgiveness of sin, the destruction of death, and the defeat of the grave. Men do not write novels for the purpose that their fellowmen may be born again of the Holy Ghost. The very conception of Christianity is transcendent. The grandeur and the sublimity of its idea are a revelation of its home and its place of birth, even as the lustre of the diamond tells the story of the sun.

III. REALITY OF CHRISTIANITY INDICATED BY THE MEANS IT SETS IN MOTION TO ACCOMPLISH ITS PROPOSED TASK

They proceed from Deity, and the theatre of their operations is not only the human race but the heart of God and the bosom of the

Infinite. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but should have everlasting life." This is the story of salvation for man, told in terms not of the human, but of the divine. Now, time and again, men have attempted to construct and to interpret plans of salvation. But these have always sprung from men, not from Deity. Neither have they ever been of grace and love, but always of works and penance and merit. Neither have they ever risen to the high levels, not only of deliverance from sin and death, but of the obtaining of eternal life. Rather they have been schemes of deliverance from temporal troubles,—viz., poverty, and drudgery, and pain, and sickness, and ignorance. But Christianity sanctifies tribulation, and confers a blessing through suffering. Meanwhile the people are still with us who would make salvation to consist in success, and Christianity to consist in culture. These it surely will lead to, but these, as such, it assuredly is not. "For the free gift of God is *eternal life* through Jesus Christ our Lord."

IV. REALITY OF CHRISTIANITY ATTESTED
BY THE INCARNATION

Whence came this conception to redeem the race by the incarnation of the Son of God?

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Not to the Jew He rejected it then, as he does today, as being in antagonism to monotheism. Not to his followers. It was only after He had arisen from the dead and the Holy Ghost had come upon them in illuminating power that the transcendent and overwhelming truth of the spiritual re-creation of the race through the mediatorship of a Divine Redeemer forced itself upon their consciousness and transformed their lives. Whence came the power that enabled this man to live a sinless life, for a sinless man had never before, and has never since, been known. Whence came this transcendent wisdom, Whence his superhuman power? Whence came the authority of his pronouncement of a general resurrection, and a universal judgment of the race? Whence is this Son of Man who appears unto us in the Gospels? There is only one answer to these questions,— “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God.” For these things have proceeded not from the mind of man, but they had their origin in the thought of God, and their birth in the bosom of Deity.

V. REALITY OF CHRISTIANITY INDICATED BY ITS ADAPTATION TO THE END FOR WHICH IT WAS DESIGNED

Its object is the spiritual purification and re-creation of the race. “Though your sins be

as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." "I will put my laws in their minds, and in their hearts will I write them, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." This is such a superhuman task,— a task utterly and wholly passing man's ability, and out-reaching human power,— that outside of Holy Writ we do not find even so much as a suggestion of it. But lo,— in Christianity we find the prophecy of the Christ fulfilled, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Christianity purifies the heart, cleanses the imagination, illuminates the understanding, enlightens and quickens the conscience, ennobles the affections, kindles exalted emotions, empowers the will. Whence is this power? Whence is this divine energy that makes new men? Is the water born of the desert? Does the sunshine spring from the ground? Is the electric current generated by the conductor? Is the harvest the offspring of the soil? But the seed, and the shower, and the sunshine are each fitted to accomplish their allotted task. And the Gospel of the Son of God is fitted to accomplish its sublime purpose, and to accomplish its transcendent aim. And this because it proceeds not from the mind of man, but from the Creator of the race. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts." "Mine own arm brought salvation."

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“Ye have been redeemed not with corruptible things, such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ.” “For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.”

VI. REALITY OF CHRISTIANITY INDICATED BY THE PERFECTION OF ITS POWER TO ACCOMPLISH ITS PURPOSE

Christianity postulates that mankind in general, and individuals in particular, have been cast out of the favor of God by the intrusion of sin. Common observation and the individual conscience alike testify to the fact of sin. The resulting condition is disaster, destruction, death. Christianity proposes to remedy this condition. How does it set itself to the task? Not by telling men that there is no reality in sin, (for then to talk of salvation and deliverance from it would be nonsense); not by telling men that it is a superficial thing, a trifling matter that God will altogether overlook, (men know better; the testimony of the consciousness of the race is overwhelmingly against this); not by telling men that they can save themselves, (men soon discover the folly of this). *Christianity essays the task of the reclamation of the race by proclaiming that it is the undertaking of the Almighty; that He who hath created hath also redeemed; that the ac-*

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tion springs from the divine love; that the heart of God is broken by human loss; and the love of God in long-suffering and tender mercy hastens to the rescue of man in his need.

For Christianity essays not only pardon, but regeneration and righteousness. For man shall be made holy. "When the clay was marred in the hands of the potter, he made it again." Man shall know the truth. Man shall practice righteousness. Man shall hate the evil and love the good. "Being made free from sin, they shall have their fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life." The prayer of the psalmist shall be answered in every seeking soul,— "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." The old man, with his deeds, shall be put off. The new man, which is of God created in righteousness and holiness, shall be put on.

Is it possible? Are the means adequate to accomplish this work? Let history tell. While 1900 years have rolled, millions upon millions of human souls have been translated out of darkness into the marvelous light of the Spirit, and have been changed from the service of Satan to the service of the Living God.

And meanwhile the world has been full of other expedients. Ceremonies, incantations, mummeries, philosophies, legislation, penances, denials,— these have tried their hand at the

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salvation of the soul,— and have tried in vain.

But never once has a human soul sought the kingdom of heaven through Jesus the Christ, the Saviour of men, and been denied. For “Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.” “And this is life eternal, that men may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.”

For Christianity essays not only salvation from sin in the life that now is, but in the world to come, life everlasting. “I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whoso liveth and believeth in me shall never die.” “For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” For we shall be delivered “from the bondage of corruption, into the liberty of the glory of the children of God.” This is the triumph of Christianity.

“ Break off your tears, ye saints and tell,
How high your great Deliverer reigns;
Sing how He spoiled the hosts of hell,
And led the monster, death, in chains.
Say, Live forever, wondrous King,
Born to redeem, and strong to save,
Then ask the monster ‘Where’s thy sting?
And where’s thy victory, boasting grave?’ ”

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VII. REALITY OF CHRISTIANITY INDICATED BY THE WORK IT HAS WROUGHT

This is the argument from effect to cause,— and it is absolutely irresistible. For men by millions have been lifted from perdition, and loss, and shame, to power, and beauty, and Christ-like manhood. Souls have been made to sing, cowards have been made conquerors, fainting spirits have become triumphant, sorrows have been turned into rejoicing, sin and uncleanness have been put away, death has lost its terrors, and eternity has become a blessed and hopeful certainty for countless thousands of the race of Adam. Christianity brings the stricken souls of men to their Creator, and there they are washed; they are purified; they are sanctified,— and there they shall be glorified. What is it? It is “the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”

Beginning with the little Apostolic band, despised, persecuted, trampled upon, spoken against, legislated against—without wealth, without schools, without a country, without a sword—it has wrestled against principalities and powers; subdued kingdoms; wrought righteousness; levelled thrones, overthrown evil long entrenched; put to flight the hosts of hell; emancipated millions of the oppressed; and to-day, as never before, assuredly essays the conquest for God, and truth, and righteousness,

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and kindness, and brotherhood, and love of the nations of the whole world.

In full assurance of faith His followers sing of the hastening triumph of their divine Redeemer and glorious King:

“ O'er every foe victorious,
He on His throne shall rest,
From age to age more glorious,
All-blessing, and all-blessed.
The tide of time shall never,
His covenant remove,
His name shall stand forever,
His changeless name of Love.”

CHAPTER VI

HAS GOD REVEALED HIMSELF TO MAN?

"Christ the dynamic of God unto salvation."

CHRISTIAN CONCEPTION OF THE WORLD FOUNDED ON THE REVELATION OF GOD

For Christianity is a religion that rests on the Divine Revelation. It is not a scientific system. It is not a philosophy. But it must be in harmony with the conclusions at which sound reason, attacking independently its own problems, arrives.

It has a world-view of its own. And this is because it begins with a personal, holy, self-revealing God. And further because its content is the redemption of the human race.

Hence it has its own interpretation to give of the facts of existence. It has its own way of looking at and accounting for the natural and the moral order. And it has its own conception of the end and the aim of things — the final consummation of it all.

Philosophy says that we cannot know all about God. God, in the deeps of His infinity,

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we cannot know. Neither can we know God in all the many modes of His revealed being. These things are beyond us. We can only approximate them.

And long ago the Scripture said "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?" "Oh, the depths of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" "Now I know in part."

But we may *know in part*. For if the nature of God and the nature of man are not foreign to each other — if man is made in the divine image — if in some measure man bears the likeness of God — then there is an element in the mind of man kindred with something in the being of God, and real knowledge is possible.

Again, the last result of science and the last word in philosophy is that God is one, and that God is absolute and infinite. This is Monotheism. But it is the Bible that has given Monotheism to the world. Three thousand years ago the seer of Israel said: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one Lord." And from Israel, through Christianity, it has passed to the possession of the race.

Again, science proceeds upon the assumption that there is a rational order in the world. Indeed there could be no science itself unless this

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were true. We could arrive at no conclusions regarding anything unless there were order and system and consistency. But this is just what science proceeds to demonstrate is here. There is rational order in the world. There is rational order in the human mind. Can we avoid the conclusions that the power from which these proceed is itself rational? But long ago the Scriptures said, "In wisdom hast thou made them all."

Again, we are told by philosophy that there is a "Power, not ourselves, that makes for righteousness." There is a moral order in the universe. Herbert Spencer calls it "a rationalized version of the ethical principles." But here we are again catching up with the Scriptures. "The word is very nigh thee, even in thy heart that thou mayest do it." And here we have reached not only intelligence and wisdom, but a will bent on the determination of good. And this good embraces the highest perfection and happiness of man. Hence this intelligent power that in wisdom works for righteousness is surely itself righteous and just and good. And this is Theism.

II. THAT GOD SHOULD REVEAL HIMSELF TO MAN BOTH NECESSARY AND REASONABLE

Lord Kelvin says: "Scientific thought is compelled to accept the thought of creative

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power." And we have just seen that this power is beneficent, and just, and good. Then this is also true,— if we are the offspring of a "good God," of a "beneficent Creator," would such an one have left us without a guide in a world of sorrow and sin? And this the more, that men are created with the desire to seek and to "search out concerning all things that are done under heaven." Man will strive to know God. Man will endeavor to find out His character. Man will strive to learn what are his relations to the world, and to man. Man will grapple with sin, and will seek to know a way to be delivered from it. And is it not to be supposed, is it not a normal conclusion, that if God is good, "He will not leave us in the dust," but that rather He will place within our hand a knowledge of Himself, and of ourselves, and of sin, and of righteousness, and of redemption, and of judgment, a revelation that will cover all our need?

Again, when we turn to the order of things around us we find the idea of a revelation from God to man, to be suggested everywhere. So soon as the necessity for communication from one individual to another arises, the means for that communication is found to be in existence. Revelation is the law and order of things. That which is felt is told. The inferior animals tell, by many voices and numberless sounds, their

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feelings one for another. The animal world is full of it. It is part of the order of nature that wherever there is animal life and feeling, there is the capacity for communication. And when we ascend in the scale and come to man, this capacity is increased. Society is communication between individuals. And this communication is a revelation of the thought, and the feeling, and the experience, and the life, of one individual to another individual. There is a world without a tongue—a world of trees and clods and stones; and there is another world where communication is constant and universal.

And shall we deem it true that the robin can sing his devotion, and the dove can tell his loyalty, and the lion can call his mate, and the whelps of the wolf can be answered when they cry for meat in their lair; but the God of goodness and kindness and love cannot make Himself known to His own, and the children of His creation shall be unanswered when they call? Perish the thought! When we think soberly, it is unthinkable. The God who loves man, and the man who cries out for God—shall these be forever severed? Shall a silence, deep and vast, and impassable, forever stand between? Can man communicate with man? And is He who made man like Himself forever gagged and fettered and bound? Shall there be no “Word of God”? Must infinite love be dumb? Must in-

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finite goodness be helpless? Must infinite kindness be impotent? Rather it is grandly and forever true:

“Lord of all being, throned afar,
Thy glory flames from sun and star;
Center and soul of every sphere,
Yet to each loving heart, how near.

“O God, where'er thy people meet,
There they behold the mercy seat;
Where'er they seek Thee, Thou art found,
And every place is hallowed ground.”

Dr. James Orr says: “The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is a being who Himself draws near to man, and seeks fellowship with him; whose relations with the spirits He has made are free and personal; who is as lovingly communicative as man, on his part, is expected to be trustfully receptive; to whom man can speak and He answers.”

Dr. Martineau says: “How should related spirits, joined by a common creative aim, intent upon whatever things are pure and good, live in the presence of each other, the one the bestower, the other the recipient, of a sacred trust, and exchange no thought, and give no sign of love between them?”

Pfleiderer says: “And why should it be less

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possible for God to enter into a loving fellowship with us than for men to do so with each other? I should be inclined to think that He is even more capable of doing so. To Him our hearts are as open as each man's heart is to himself. He sees through and through them. And He desires to live in them, and to fill them with His own sacred energy and blessedness."

III. HOW GOD HAS REVEALED HIMSELF TO MAN

Passing the witness of nature: "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth His handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech and night unto night sheweth knowledge."

"The spacious firmament on high
With all the blue ethereal sky,

And spangled heavens, a shining frame,
Their great original proclaim."

"The sun, the moon, the stars, the seas and the
hills and the plains,—
Are not these, O soul, the vision of Him who
reigns?"

Passing the testimony of reason, "Hath not
Mine hand made all these things?"

Passing the testimony of consciousness, "For
in Him we live, and move and have our being."

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May we turn to the Scriptures,— the written Word, the Word of God ; for the Scriptures uncover Christ, and Christ uncovers God.

May we ask three questions :

1. *What are the Scriptures?*

This is the testimony of the Scriptures to themselves : They say, “ Thus saith the Lord ”; “ The Word of the Lord came ”; “ Christ spake in Him ”; “ Who hath made man’s mouth ? Have not I, the Lord ? I will put my words into thy mouth ”; “ I will give thee tables of stone, commandments which I have written ”; “ And He gave unto Moses on Mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God ”; “ Holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost ”; “ The Scriptures must be fulfilled ”; “ The Scriptures cannot be broken.”

2. *Who is this Christ?*

May we take His testimony concerning Himself ? For surely His testimony, it may fairly be presumed, few of us would care to dispute. What does He say of Himself ? He says : “ I am the bread of life ; He that cometh to Me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst.”

“ He that believeth on Me, hath everlasting life.”

“ I am the bread of life, which came down from heaven ; if any man eat of this bread, he

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shall live forever; and the bread that I shall give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

"He that believeth on Me as the Scriptures hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."

"I am the light of the world."

"If a man keep my word, he shall never see death."

"Before Abraham was, I am."

"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again. No one taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again."

"I am the good shepherd. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. I and my Father are one."

"For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom He will."

"For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son."

"That all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father, He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which hath sent Him."

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“Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming and now is when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live.”

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.”

“For as the Father hath life in Himself; so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself;

“And hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man.”

“Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice.

“And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of condemnation.”

What wonderful words are these? He has life in Himself. Not delegated, but His own. He gives eternal life. He is eternal. He lays down His life. He takes it again. He came down from Heaven. He gives His life for the world. He is the Judge of all men. He claims honor equal with the Father. He shall raise the dead. He shall empty the graves of the world.

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This is the Lord Jesus Christ's account of Himself. Shall we account Him competent to give account of Himself? Who should know if not He? Are you not the best authority on who you are, on how much you are worth? And is not Christ the best authority on who He was, and what He was?

Can a man be everywhere at once? But Christ says: "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." Is this a characteristic of man or of God?

He says: "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Is this the work of man, or of God?

He takes divine honors unto Himself. He says He is Lord of men, and of angels, and of demons. Is that the power of man, or of God? And if it is so, then He is the Son of God. This is the testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ concerning Himself.

May we turn to the testimony of others:

The Bible says that all things were made by Him. Who is able to create? Man or God?

The Bible says that at the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow. Before whom? A man?

The Bible says, "Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever." Is that characteristic of humanity, or of Deity?

May we turn to the testimony of His works:

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He says to the man with the withered hand, "Stretch forth thine hand." He feeds seven thousand people with five loaves of bread. He is asleep in a ship at sea. A storm comes rushing down the mountain pass; and the waves of the lake are lashed into foam, and He awakes, and His word is "Peace, be still," and lo, the winds and the waves answer, and obey. Was it a man that smoothed the heaving floor of Galilee? Go to Mount Vernon. Stand before the marble that keeps the dust of Washington, and command the dead to come forth. But there is a dead girl in Capernaum. Her brow is marble; her lips are ashen; her frame is dust. But Christ comes. And she wakes to life again, and the ashes of the tomb glow once more with the pulsations of life. Who called her back? Who brought her forth from the grave? Was it a man? Or was it Christ the Lord?

And yet again. We read in the Book: "We must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ." For the day of the present shall pass. And the day of the future will come. And the bending skies will divide. And the hosts of heaven will appear. And the earth and the sea shall give up their dead. And the tomb shall return its sacred dust. And in the midst shall be raised a throne. And on the throne shall be placed a Book. It is the Lamb's Book of Life. Who shall ascend that throne?

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Who shall open that Book? Shall you? Shall I? "The Lion of the tribe of Judah, He hath prevailed." "The Lamb of God, He was found worthy." "And before Him shall be gathered all nations. And He shall separate them one from another." Who is this before whose face the earth and the heaven shall flee away? Who is this who is able to say, "Behold I make all things new." It is the Lord from heaven. It is the Christ of the ages "Who liveth, and was dead, and behold He is alive forevermore."

And in the unplummeted depths of His Divinity shall we not trust? And shall not our faith take wing on the words of the Christian's song of triumph:

"Jesus, thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress,
Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head."

3. And what of the God whom this Christ uncovers to us? Will you hear the wondrous story? It is the marvel of the ages. He is a *suffering* God. He is full of compassion. His tender mercies are over all His works. He is rich in mercy. He is a sin-pardoning God. "Come, saith Jehovah, and let us reason together; though your sins be as scarlet they shall be white as snow; and though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

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“Return unto me, for I have redeemed thee.” “Like as a Father pitith his children, so the Lord pitith them that fear Him.” “Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” “And whosoever cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.” “Thy sins and thine iniquities will I remember no more.” “As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you.” “Fear thou not, for I am with thee. Be not dismayed, for I am thy God. I will strengthen thee. Yea, I will help thee. Yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.” “For by grace are ye saved through faith. And that not of yourselves. It is the gift of God.” “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” What more would we? Can we not come to this God? Is not this the God to whom we can go with our broken heart, and our sin-sick soul, and our crushed spirit?

For He has sought us. And He has redeemed us. And He has washed us from our sins in His own blood. And He has made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. And He has given us the victory over death. And He has made us to triumph over the grave. “Who is this that cometh from Edom, with

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dyed garments from Bozrah? This that is glorious in His apparel, travelling in the greatness of His strength? I that speak in righteousness, *mighty to save.*"

CHAPTER VII

THE TESTIMONY OF THE CHRISTIAN

"We know we have passed from death unto life."

I. CONSCIOUSNESS THE ORIGIN AND THE FOUNDATION OF OUR KNOWLEDGE

Here is the grist the philosopher grinds. From this material he makes his meal, which same he offers to you as his philosophy. Here is the stuff that the scientist analyzes, and about which he offers to you his theories. The testimony of consciousness is *absolutely trustworthy*. To deny this is to undermine knowledge. This is simply saying that if ten men see a tree fall, we must accept their statement. To say that they might have supposed that they saw a tree fall but that that is no reason why anyone should believe a tree did fall, is to undermine the basis of knowledge. This is admitted by all. The common man admits it; the philosopher admits it; the scientist admits it. The common man believes what he sees for himself. He believes what he hears for himself. But so

too does the scientist. This is exactly what he does do. And this is why he asks us to believe him. But the philosopher does precisely the same thing. He points out to us that consciousness always affirms the exact truth. Upon this foundation he builds his system, and because of this he makes his appeal that we accept him.

Turning to the Scriptures we find the same thing to be true. The Apostles ask us to accept their statements because they were eye-witnesses of what they record.

II. CONSCIOUSNESS BRINGS ALL KINDS OF KNOWLEDGE

Consciousness brings to us all kinds of knowledge, and of all kinds of things, about which we know anything. But consciousness itself is *one power*. Just as the eye is one, whether we look upon the velvet carpet of the green fields, or upon the many-shaded colorings of the flowers, or upon the gorgeous splendors of the sunset, or upon the hundreds of tiny creatures that live and move in a single drop of water, or upon the countless hosts of the starry heavens, or upon the beasts of the field, or upon the birds of the air, or upon the fish of the sea — the objects may be varied and numberless, but the power of visual perception is one. Just as the

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sense of taste is one whether we taste apples, or pumpkins, or potatoes, or pies, or pine-apples, or castor-oil — the objects may be many, the sense of taste is one.

So is the power we call consciousness one and indivisible. All that we know through sight, or through hearing, or through smelling or through touching, are different aspects of the material world. The differences lie in them, not in the power through which they are known. In order to know new properties of matter we need only a way of presenting them to the mind, such as the telescope or the microscope, not a new mental endowment. For consciousness is the capacity of knowing things in themselves. And this capacity is directed toward, and fixed upon, anything and everything that is presented to it. The objects of attention may change, but that which knows them is one and the same.

III. WE ARE IN THE PRESENCE OF MYSTERY, DEEP AND IMPENETRABLE

May we pause to say that we are here in the presence of mystery, deep and impenetrable, but no more so than many another mystery that surrounds us. "Gravitation is the power by which every particle of matter attracts every other particle, however far separated these may

be; a power of tremendous force, holding worlds such as ours in their orbits, as they move round the sun, millions of miles distant, and controlling the movements of the unnumbered worlds of space; worlds greater far than ours, and separated from one another by distances of which the mind can form no thought. Who can tell what this power is, or explain the how, or can think it possible beyond the knowledge of the fact? This is as deep a mystery as is consciousness. The same truth appears in regard to all other things. Who can understand cohesion, the force which binds together the atoms of matter, giving tensile strength; that of a rod, or bar of steel, almost passes belief. Or the expansive force of steam? Who knows what electricity is, or magnetism? What possible conception can anyone have of how seeds and plants grow? The most advanced scientist is as ignorant as an untaught child. He may state the successive steps in the life process, but to him the how is utterly unknown. No one can explain the vital union between soul and body in man. Such facts as these we know as facts, but that is all—they arise from within the mystery from which they refuse to come forth. And so with consciousness. It is that inexplicable, mysterious power of the soul by which we know the things which are present to us."

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IV. CONSCIOUSNESS THE SAME NO MATTER WHAT ITS NAME

May we pause to say this also. The consciousness is the same no matter what name you call it by. You may give it any name you wish. It does not alter the knowledge. Christian Science says that all is mind. It says that a razor, for example, is simply an idea — that it is not a piece of matter at all. And you attempt to shave the superfluous hair off your face, or pare a corn from your toe; and your hand slips; and you cut a gash in your flesh. What is it? It is an experience in the realm of the ideal. You have an ideal razor, cutting an ideal gash in your ideal face or foot, and raising an ideal flow of blood, from an ideal wound, and causing an ideal pain, and necessitating the application of an ideal piece of absorbent cotton, or some ideal alcohol, or other ideal cauterizing agency, which produces an ideal stoppage of the ideal flow of ideal blood, and the ideal cessation of the ideal pain, and you are afforded ideal relief, and have ideal satisfaction and ideal peace of mind. But all this does not in the least alter the testimony of consciousness. The facts presented to it are the same, call them by whatever names you will. They are facts of consciousness. They lie in the realm of experience. It is as idle

to battle against them as it would be to attempt to oppose the turn of the tide.

V. EVIDENTIAL VALUE OF THE TESTIMONY OF THE CHRISTIAN

This brings us face to face with the fact of the evidential value of the testimony of the Christian. For it is a fact of consciousness. Our knowledge of it does not come through the senses. It is neither tasted, nor seen, nor touched, nor heard. But it comes to us through experience. And to deny the reality of all knowledge save of that which we see, or hear, or taste, or smell, or touch, is to deny the reality of the affections, and of the virtues, and of the principles that constitute the nobler mind. But it is false to deny them, because we experience them. They come into our consciousness. And to deny the facts of consciousness is to deny the trustworthiness of human knowledge. And this is just what we have seen that neither science nor philosophy does. Rather both build all their systems upon this. But both science and philosophy have confined themselves too closely to the knowledge coming through the senses, and have taken too little account of the knowledge coming to us through experience.

The testimony of the Christian lies in the realm of experience. It is a fact of conscious-

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ness. We know it as we know that we love our country. We know it as we know that we love our children. We know it as we know that we love our mothers. We know it as we know that we love the beauty of the green fields, and the flowery dells, and the rippling brooks. We know it as we know that we love beautiful music, and towering mountains, and glowing sunset-skies, and silent, shining stars. We know it as we know we love the roses and the lilies. We know it as we know we love to sing. We know it as we know we love the charmed circle we call our home.

Does the patriot know? Ask Nathan Hale on the gallows. Ask Arnold von Winklereid at the pass of Sempach. Ask Kosciusko on the walls of Warsaw. Ask the Camerons at Culloden. Ask Washington at Valley Forge. Ask Cromwell at Dunbar. Ask Bruce at Bannockburn. Ask Regulus at Carthage.

Does the Christian know? Ask John Bradford on the scaffold. Ask Margaret of Perth in the waters of the Solway. Ask Fortuna and Felicia in the arena of the Coliseum. Ask Bunyan in Bedford jail. Ask Tyndale in the dungeon. Ask Coligny in the streets of Paris. Ask Luther in the Wartburg.

What is the testimony of the Christian? May we state it in the words of another: "God is the Father, everlasting in His love. Love was

the end for which He made the world, for which He made every human soul. His glory is to diffuse happiness, to fill up the silent places of the universe with voices that speak out of glad hearts. Because He made man for love, He cannot bear to see man lost. Rather than see the loss, He will suffer sacrifice. In the place we call hell, love as really is as in the place we call heaven, though in the one place it is the complacency of pleasure in the holy and the happy which seems like the brightness of everlasting sunshine or the glad music of waves that break in perennial laughter, but in the other it is the compassion of pity for the bad and the miserable which seems like a face shaded with everlasting regret, or the muffled weeping of a sorrow too deep to be heard. That grand thought of a God, who is eternal Father, all the more regal and sovereign that He is absolutely Father, can never fail to touch the heart of the man who understands it, be he savage or sage." Told by Jesus, it is this: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish but might have everlasting life." Told by Paul it is this: "The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit that we are children of God; and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also

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glorified together." "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

Told by countless thousands of saved men for nineteen hundred years it is this: Jesus Christ is my Saviour. Every man when he looks himself squarely in the face knows himself to be bad. Every man, conscious of the moral obliquity of his own nature, is also conscious of his own inability to transform himself into a righteous man, a justified man, a guiltless man. Can a man forgive himself? Can a man re-create himself? Can a man regenerate himself? Can a man give spiritual birth to his own spirit? "That which is crooked cannot be made straight, and that which is wanting cannot be numbered." "Sin in the soul is a fact against which the reason battles in vain."

This is the testimony of the Christian: Jesus Christ has saved my soul. "This poor man cried and the Lord heard him, and delivered him out of all his troubles." "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." It is Christ living, and reigning, and ruling and loving in a new-born, Christ-born human soul. Not that all mysteries are solved, but the difficulties have lost their significance. For love has lighted the path, and the fires of love have burned the barriers away. Did you never see a human love that baffled all your reason? "For the heart has reasons of its own, that the reason knows

not of." And the Christian cannot explain the new-found life that has come to be his possession, and his experience, no more than he can explain why the morning answers the kiss of the sunshine, and withdraws from the embrace of the night. But he has what is better than the explanation — he has the life itself. No babe ever lay on a mother's breast that could *explain* the mysteries of a mother's love. But no babe was ever folded to a mother's heart that did not *know* a mother's love.

And this is the testimony of the Christian. A new man has arisen within him. A sense of moral power has come over him. The heights of moral probity tower far above him. But they are no longer impossible. "I can do all things through Christ"—this is his battle cry. For Christ has become the center round which all his life revolves. And this is the communion of saints. A million other men are revolving around the same Saviour, as the planets revolve about the sun.

For the testimony of the Christian is the conscious experience of Christ in the soul. It is "Christ in us the hope of glory." The question of the fact of Christianity is transferred to the realm of the practical. It is no longer a question of something that was, or something that may be, or something that shall be; it is a matter of dealing with a something that is.

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The new pragmatic philosophy says the ultimate question for every man is: "What shall I do to be saved?" The testimony of the Christian is: "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creation; old things are passed away; behold all things are become new." "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine." "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." A blind man came to Jesus. Christ said to him: "Let me anoint your eyes with clay, and you go wash in the pool of Siloam." "And he went and washed and came seeing." And this was his testimony: "One thing I know: that whereas I was blind, now I see." "And he worshipped Him." This is the testimony of the Christian.

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee,
Let the water, and the blood,
From thy riven side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure,
Save me from its guilt and power."

CHAPTER VIII

IS THE BIBLE THE WORD OF GOD?

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God."

This is ever a question of deepest interest to man. For the Bible message is a wonderful story, on a theme sublime, treating matters of vital importance to every individual, and to the entire race.

And if its record may be trusted, then man may know who created him, and why; what shall be his destiny, and whither he is bound; for here life and death, and immortality, and human responsibility to Deity are set before us.

Is the Bible the Word of God? Has God spoken here? Has Deity uncovered reality here? If so, then you and I may learn, and know, and live.

I. THE MEANING OF INSPIRATION

May we ask first: What do we mean by inspiration?

And in answer we may say, first of all, we do not mean revelation. Revelation is divine communication. Inspiration is divine direction.

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Neither is inspiration illumination. For the mind of every child of God is enlightened when the Holy Spirit takes up His abode there. But every child of God is not inspired to write the oracles of the Most High.

Neither is it human genius. Human genius is natural. Inspiration, as applied to the writing of the Scriptures, is supernatural. It is an endowment of power, coming upon the authors of the books of the Bible, enabling them to write the Word of God. We discern the difference when we try to think of a human genius prefacing his writings with the words: "Thus saith the Lord."

We do not know how the Holy Spirit moved upon men, but we know the results. Neither do we know how the spirit recreates a bad man, and makes him a good man, but we see the effects.

Neither do we mean that the men who wrote the Scriptures were always and everywhere inspired, infallible, inerrant men. They were not. They made mistakes. They fell into errors of conduct. But we do mean that when they wrote the Scriptures they were moved upon and guided by the Spirit of God. But the meaning of inspiration is this: According to the Scriptures themselves, inspiration is an extraordinary, divine agency upon teachers, while giving instruction, by which they were taught what

and how they should write. This is not unto the obliteration of personality. As Dr. Henry B. Smith says: "God speaks through the personality as well as through the lips of His messengers." Wayland Hoyt says: "Inspiration is not a mechanical, crass, bald compulsion of the sacred writers, but rather a dynamic, divine influence over their freely acting faculties." What may be called the interior process of the Spirit's action upon the minds of the speakers was of course inscrutable, even to themselves. That they were conscious, however, of such an influence, is manifest from the authority with which they put forth their words: yet, when they sat down to write, the divine and the human elements in their mental action were perfectly harmonious and inseparable.

As to the outward method, the Spirit acted on the minds of inspired men in a variety of ways, sometimes by audible words, sometimes by direct inward suggestions, sometimes by outward, visible signs, sometimes by visions and dreams.

Inspiration was further concerned, also, in giving to the sacred writers divine direction. Here too, there was diversity of mode. For sometimes men were moved of the Spirit to write of things which otherwise they could not know, as in prophecy. Sometimes they were guided

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to write a summary record of history. Sometimes they were moved to write divine teaching through philosophy, or reason, or experience. Sometimes they were influenced to write parables. Sometimes to record visions.

II. THE INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES

How do we know the Scriptures are inspired?

The answer covers a wide range. For to prove that the Scriptures are inspired we might, with propriety, refer to the excellence of the doctrines, precepts, and promises, and other instructions which they contain; to the simplicity and majesty of their style; to the agreement of the different parts, and the scope of the whole; especially to the discovery they make of man's fallen and ruined estate, and the way of salvation through a Redeemer; together with their power to enlighten and sanctify the heart, and the accompanying witness of the Spirit in believers.

But there is another ground of appeal. The Saviour applied the old law that life is known by what it brings forth. He said: "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." And again: "Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?"

Now, according to this principle, if the Bible is a fraud and a falsehood, if it is a cheat and

a lie, if it is an imposition and a humbug — then we know what manner of returns to look for wherever it is placed among the people. We will look for degeneration, and disorder, and for fanaticism, and decline, for immorality, and intrigue, and dishonor.

But when we search for the facts, what do we find? Just the opposite. Wherever the Bible goes, there a new manhood appears. Is it among the red Indians? Idlers and murderers become workmen and gentlemen. Is it among the Hottentots? Beastly men become manly men. Is it in the islands of the sea? Cannibals become Christians. Is it among degenerate Americans? The saloon and the gambling hall are deserted, and the home and the church are chosen. "By their fruits ye shall know them." And judged by these fruits, what is the Bible?

There is a wider field where the same principle may be applied. There are other cherished and ancient writings. There are other religions. There is Confucianism, and Hinduism, and Islamism. But what are the fruits? Modern India is the fruit of the Veda. Modern China is the answer to the writings of Confucius. And modern Turkey is the fruit borne by the Koran.

There is another ground of appeal. The Bible answers human need. Here are the an-

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swers to the ever-recurring, insistent, peremptory demands of the human soul. Who am I? What am I? Who placed me here? What is the meaning? Whither am I going? These are the things we want to know. What is death? "If a man die, shall he live again?" And these the Bible answers. It "brings life and immortality to light." It discovers God. It relates man. It measures the grave. It defies death. It plants the rose of immortality upon the tomb.

There is another ground of appeal. For this is ever the most vital issue of man — how to get back to God. "O, that I knew where I might find Him" is the deep and insistent wail of the stricken, wandering soul. And this hunger of the heart the Bible fills. Here is slaked this thirst of the soul. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters. And he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat. Yea, come, buy wine and milk, for ye have sold yourselves for naught, and ye shall be redeemed without money, and without price." It is grandly true. For while other books pause with the needs of the body, the Bible discovers the salvation of the soul. The Bible tells a man how he may be saved. Is this the work of man? Can man, himself lost, guide his fellow home? This is the light of revelation, streaming upon the human pathway, shed by a hand

divine. God is here. "Return unto me, for I have redeemed thee." "Fear thou not for *I* am with thee. Be not dismayed, for *I* am thy God. I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."

There is another ground of appeal. The men themselves who wrote these books give the most direct and the most conclusive evidence that the Scriptures are divinely inspired.

In the first place, these men sufficiently authenticated their divine commission. They established their right to be believed. Samuel and Isaiah, and Jeremiah, and Paul, and Amos, and John are the names of men whose integrity cannot be challenged. Their work was not done in a corner. Moses and Joshua and Daniel are names that call for confidence in their utterances. Where they go on record most of us would scarcely care to contravene their statements.

Now they have gone on record in this very matter of their own inspiration. They are before the world in the position of teachers of divine truth. What have they to say as to the source of their authority? What is their testimony as to their own infallibility? For whatever their testimony is, these men have a right to call for acceptance of the same. And what is the record?

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Does it read, Thus saith Moses — Thus saith Isaiah — Thus saith John — Thus saith Paul? Or does it read, “Thus saith the Lord?”

Now, I demand a verdict. What shall we do with the testimony? Nay, rather, if Jehovah hath spoken, in your world and mine, shall it not be He who will call for an answer?

Again, I raise the question — if we do not receive the testimony of these men in this matter, why should we accept it on anything else? If they have borne false witness here, why should they be accepted elsewhere? Were they not as competent to judge here as elsewhere? And were they not as much disposed to speak the truth here as elsewhere?

Here is their divine commission. Here is their divine authority. Here is their plain testimony. To reject it is to throw them, and their writings, and their religion out of court.

III. A STUDY OF THE TESTIMONY

Dr. James H. Brookes is authority for the statement that the phrase or its equivalent, “Thus saith the Lord,” occurs in the Old Testament two thousand times. That covers rather a large portion of the Old Testament. What are we going to do about it?

Look, for a moment, at the manner in which the utterances of the Old Testament writers are

introduced into the New Testament. Here is an illustration. Matthew 1:22, "Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet."

Again, look for a moment, at the manner of the regard of Christ and His apostles for the Old Testament. Christ said He came "not to destroy, but to fulfill, the law and the prophets." Matt. 5:17. Again He said, "The Scripture cannot be broken." Again in Matthew 22:31-32 Christ quotes from the Old Testament thus: "Now as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. God is not the God of the dead but of the living.'"

Again, look at the direct teaching of the apostles about the Old Testament. Peter says: "No prophecy ever came by the will of man, but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit." II Pet. 1:21. And Paul says: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God." II Tim. 3:16.

Elsewhere passages are cited from Scripture as the words of the Holy Spirit. In the Epistle to the Hebrews, 3:7, we read: "Wherefore, as the Holy Ghost saith, 'Today, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.'" And in the Book of Acts, 4:24, "And when



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they heard that they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, ‘Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is; who, by the mouth of thy servant David, hast said: Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? ’ ”

Finally, may we study especially the direct testimony of Jesus Christ:

“ The Lord Jesus Christ possessed the spirit of wisdom without measure, and came to bear witness to the truth.” His works proved that he was what he declared himself to be,— the Messiah, the great Prophet, the infallible teacher. The faith which rests on him rests on a rock.

As soon, then, as we learn how he regarded the Scriptures we have reached the end of our inquiries. His word is truth.

Now every one who carefully attends to the four gospels will find that Christ everywhere spoke of that collection of writings called the Scriptures as the “Word of God.” He regarded the whole of it in this light. He treated the Scripture, and every part of it, as infallibly true, and as clothed with divine authority. He thus distinguished it from every mere human production.

Nothing written by men can be entitled to the respect which Christ showed to the Scrip-



tures. This, to all Christians, is direct and incontrovertible evidence of the divine origin of the Scriptures. Of itself, and of itself alone, it is perfect and wholly conclusive testimony.

For this is the meaning. The Old Testament is authenticated by the New Testament. But in the New Testament we have the Incarnate Word. And the Incarnate Word is God. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." The inspiration of the Old Testament is authenticated by the Son of God.

Turning to the inspiration of the New Testament. What is the direct testimony of Jesus Christ there?

We find that He promised the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to guide the apostles. "The Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say." Luke 12:12. "For it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost." Mark 13:11. "Which things also we speak not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth." I Cor. 2:13.

Now, if the Apostles were preserved against error in their oral utterances, how much more may we suppose them to have been inspired in writing what was to share the faith of the church for all time?

Peter sets his seal upon the writings of Paul as Scripture, thus: "In which are some

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things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction." II Peter 3:17.

What, then, is our conclusion?

The Bible is the word of God. It is inspired. Therefore it is infallible. The Holy Spirit directed the sacred writers. They wrote His Word. Their individuality was not destroyed. Their liberty was not abridged. As teachers they were infallible. As Christians they were not perfect. And this is because inspiration is one thing. And sanctification is another thing.

The Bible is a human book.

The Bible is a divine book.

The Bible had human authors.

The Bible had a divine author.

Moses wrote history. David wrote psalms. Paul wrote letters. But had these men not been guided their writings might contain much that was valuable, but they would not be an infallible guide to God. But the Scriptures have another author, and that author is the Spirit of God.

CHAPTER IX

THE LIVING WORD AND LIFE ETERNAL

I. THE LAW OF OBEDIENCE IS THE LAW OF LIFE

Viewed from the bottom of an ascending scale, the law of obedience is the law of life. Unless the clay obeys the law of the plant, and is taken up into it, and assimilated by it, and organized into its substance, it must remain forever on the lower level. Unless the mind of the child obeys the law of education, it will remain forever uninformed, undeveloped, uncontrolled. Unless the moral nature heeds the imperial mandate of conscience, confusion and degeneration will hold riot in the garden of the soul.

II. JESUS CHRIST THE LIFE OF GOD IN THE WORLD OF MEN

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the life of God, coming into the world of men. His mission is the lifting up of the lives of men from the lower levels of time and sin and death to the higher levels of righteousness and immor-

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tality. He accomplishes this through redemption, regeneration, and glorification. This He does, by virtue of what He is. For He is: The Creator of the ends of the earth, and all things under the sun. "All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made." "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men."

God, the Father, announced Him: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

He announced, concerning himself: "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father." "Believe me, that I am in the Father, and the Father in me." "He that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me."

III. THE ESTATE OF MAN, APART FROM JESUS, THE CHRIST, THE SAVIOUR

Made in the image of the righteous and holy God; made for virtue, and holiness, and beauty, and immortality; "made but little lower than the angels"; behold, and wonder how he hath fallen.

We look abroad upon this world and call it the land of the living, but it might much more appropriately be called the land of the dying. For while nature breaks forth in perennial beauty with the returning of the seasons, the blight of death has fallen upon the life of man. Not only is the body wrenched from the soul,

and driven back to dust, and dissolution and decay within the hungry caverns of the tomb, but sin has entered the moral man, and the skeleton of death shows its ghastly form in the realms of the spirit; and cruelty and lust, and ignorance, and vice, and despair disport themselves, and make a havoc of hell in the human heart.

And this world of ours which might have been a paradise and an Eden where the wings of angels waked the whispers of a waiting heaven, and the spirit of Jehovah clothed the forms of men with the garments of immortality, has become a vast charnel house, a boundless burying ground, a gigantic cemetery.

IV. HOW SHALL THE CHILDREN OF MEN BE DELIVERED?

First, the call of life is ever from the higher to the lower. The grass, and the trees, and the flowers are forever calling to the material world beneath them, and taking them up and transforming them into their own kingdom. And the call comes from the members of the animal kingdom to the world of vegetable life to be taken up, and wrought into higher forms.

And in man the mind calls to the body to become its servant and the soul calls upon the mind to perform and answer its desires. And

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the spirit directs and controls the life of the soul.

The life in no one kingdom is able to project itself into the kingdom above it. The initial action must come from above. That which is above must reach down and gather up, and assimilate, and transform.

Second, the lower must conform to the higher. That which is beneath must become obedient to that which is above. If transformation is to be accomplished, the life which is on the lower level must yield itself up to the conditions of existence on the higher level. *And this law of obedience is universal throughout animate existence.*

But when we come to humanity a new element appears. There is another kind of life here. Consciousness enters upon the scene. Man knows himself. Choice becomes the condition of relationship. Man chooses his course of conduct. He looks upon himself, and is conscious of the capacity to direct himself. Alternatives lie before him. For life above him reaches out beckoning hands inviting him upward. And life beneath him lays hold of him with clinging hands striving to drag him down.

“For God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life.” This is the kingdom that cometh down

from above. This is man's deliverance. This is salvation. This is the marvelous mission of the Christ. To lay hold of men dead in trespasses and in sins, and to lift them up, and to ransom them from the power of sin and of death, and to deliver them from the grave, and to transform them into His own image, and to endue them with eternal life.

V. THE THINGS CHARACTERISTIC OF THE SCRIPTURES

This is the Christ of the Scriptures. And this Christ, who brings eternal life to men, it is the mission of the Scriptures forever to uncover, forever to reveal, forever to discover to men.

What things are characteristic of these Scriptures? What marks do they bear of their high mission? What impress is upon them?

For here the story is told, to men dead in trespasses and in sins, of the way that leads to life eternal. And this is the greatest message in all the world. Beside this story, all other stories pale and vanish. Compared with this thing, all other things are insignificant. Measured by the interest bound up in this, all other interests pass out of existence.

What is this Word? And what are the qualities that keep it forever the perennial pathway o'er which the feet of the children of men ap-

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proach the Christ, the Fountain of Eternal Life?

1. Chief among its characteristics stands its theme — the greatest that has ever entered human thought. For here upon the sacred page God and Christ and man appear. Here is set forth our life and its meaning. Here is discovered the cause of death, our terrible affliction. Here we are told of judgment to come. Here redemption, and pardon, and a new life in Christ Jesus are brought to us. Who is sufficient to declare unto us the truth, and the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, about such things?

We talk of progress and advancement in the secular sciences, as though the most inspiring thing that could come into a man's life were the knowledge of the composition of the mud under his feet. And this the more so, when we are refreshingly reminded, though where the assurance of it lies we fail to see, that the vaunted knowledge of today will be the refuse of tomorrow.

How different from the revelation written here of the truth of God as it is in Jesus Christ? The truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth is here. And the righteousness, and the revelation, and the redemption that reach us, and ransom us today, are not relegated to the refuse heap tomorrow. Rather, it is forever

true: "I am Jehovah; I change not. Therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."

2. Its attitude toward sinful man. For the Bible draws no flattering picture of man and his world. Upon its page he is not portrayed, in his present fallen condition, as a being of noble instincts and desires, a being of high aspirations and exalted ideals.

Neither does the Bible describe the career of the race as the brave and persistent and successful struggle against an untoward environment and adverse circumstances. Rather the portrayal is of disobedience and lawlessness and wantonness — departure from God, and the choice of the downward road.

Neither does the Bible represent man as having entered the world through no fault of his own, under conditions hard to be borne, and as having gradually wrought out a better lot, through the exercise of his own inherent powers. His achievements, his civilization, his cities, his society, receive no lauding here.

But instead, here is meted out to man the severest condemnation. His conduct is filled with unrighteousness. His heart is filled with covetousness. His thought is envy and deceit and guile. His imagination is vile. His devisings are mischief. His wisdom is selfishness and foolishness. Insolent, proud, vaunting and disobedient, he is hateful to God.

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"There is none righteous — no, not one." "Dead in trespasses and in sins." "The children of disobedience." The "children of wrath"—these are the Bible descriptions of man.

Neither does the Bible predict the ultimate triumph of civilization. Education and culture shall not avail.

The Bible sets itself steadfastly against man's selfishness, and cruelty, and blood-thirstiness — though man himself dignifies it with the name of patriotism. War is born of lust. Cruelty is the offspring of greed. Vanity, indulgence, falsehood, pride — these are declared to be the characteristics of man.

How inconsistent and altogether astonishing that men should be insistent that man draw this picture of himself. And yet how consistent the desire on the part of fallen men to eliminate the hand divine from the drawing of this picture. For if the finger of God has traced these lines, then the story they tell is true.

3. And hence it is that men have hated the Bible as perhaps nothing else under the sun has been hated by the heart of man. For here its own hideousness is uncovered. And here its own guilt is laid under condemnation.

And this, too, has added fuel to the flame of fierce hate that has ever consumed the heart of man against the Word of God. The Bible

takes the place of authority. Its word goes forth as a mandate. It speaks not by permission, but in command. It does not advise; it directs. And its imperial mandate goes forth to all ranks and conditions of men. The high and the low, the exalted and the humble, the master and the slave, the sovereign and the peasant — there is no class with God — and the Bible speaks one message.

And this word of authority is hateful to man. He meets it nowhere else. Banish this, and he is free. Annihilate this source of authority, and man will know no authority but that which is self-created and self-imposed. He will be his own and only grand master. And how this sentiment is abroad in the world today. We hear it on every side. And how sympathetic is the reception it always receives. The Bible has forged the chains that have held man in cruel bondage. The Bible has been the source of a narrow theology that has cramped and cruelly hampered man's free development. The time of his emancipation draweth nigh. The days of his bondage are over. Freed from the bondage imposed by the Bible, how he will arise in majesty, and how grandly he will acquit himself! He is not fallen. The end of his unregenerate existence is not destruction.

The only deliverance of which he stands in need is himself and the strength of his own

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hand. How unwelcome then is this Book, that uncovers human guilt and condemns human lust, and writes the doom of destruction after human sin.

4. And hence it is that persecution has been heaped upon the Bible by the hand of man as upon no other book. Force, violence, the flame and the fagot, the executioner, bans, edicts, the death penalty — all have been exhausted against it.

Men have denied its authority; have impugned its veracity and even its morality; have ridiculed its claims upon the conscience; have sought its destruction by every known means — and all to no avail. All have miserably failed. Against it Voltaire directed his venomous pen. Upon it fell the shafts of his hatred. Unable to dethrone it in his own day, he had recourse to prophecy. In the nineteenth century the Bible would become extinct. So, too, did Thomas Paine. Give his book fifty years, and the Bible would go out of print. Thrice fifty years have multiplied. Gone are the boaster and his book, both well-nigh forgotten.

More recently Darwin sent forth his book, and the acclamation of delight echoed round the world. Haeckel called it the "Anti-Genesis," and declared that by a single stroke Darwin had annihilated the dogma of Creation.

Here at last was a sword that thrust the Bible through its very heart. Man was free at last. He had uncovered his noble ancestry. And rejoicing in the honors hereby heaped upon him, he shouted with delight to find himself free from the fetters of a holy and a righteous and a redeeming God.

And now a half-century has well-nigh spent its course, and science has been busy correcting her blunders, and what things have been proven are found to form no weapon against the Scriptures, but rather to corroborate and sustain. Not one jot and not one tittle of the statements of the Bible have been moved, while science has been most busy keeping her feet upon the shifting sands of her own conclusions.

5. Another characteristic of this Book is its discernment of the heart of man. "For the Word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than a two-edged sword — piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow — and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the human heart."

We go to other books to learn of other men.

We go to the Bible to learn of ourselves.

We read the ballads of the sweet songster of Scotland, and we see the heart of Burns uncovered there.

We read the Psalms of David, and lo, we discover our own heart.

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Turning these pages the conviction comes home, this Book knows all about me.

“For there is not a word in mine heart, but lo, Thou knowest it altogether.”

“Thou understandest my thought afar off.”
“Thou knowest my down-sitting, and mine uprising.” Here we discover our real selves. Here our motives are labelled. Here the hunger of the soul is appeased. Here we find what we are, and what we may become.

6. And hence it is that it is at home in the hands of every man — all languages, all peoples, all nations. It was produced by the Jews, and the Jews have a country no more. Themselves persecuted unto the ends of the earth, their Book has entered into the place of supremacy in every nation attaining civilization. Born of the Orient, it civilizes the Occident. It speaks from the printed page of four hundred languages. Born of one peculiar people, it becomes the property and the possession of all peoples, and the intimate and prized companion and treasure of all nations, however radically different, wherever found beneath the sun.

VI. THE STORY TOLD BY THE SCRIPTURES

Now what is the story they tell? What are they written about? What do men find in these pages?

"This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life. And this life is in his Son."

This is the marvelous mission of the Son of Man — to give eternal life to a world of lost men. “I am come that they might have life.” This is his own announcement of himself.

This brings us face to face with the profound mystery of generation. Here science stops. Philosophy pauses. The Bible says, God.

But science can, and does say this, in the words of Lord Kelvin: “Inanimate matter cannot become living except under the influence of matter already living.” “This is a fact in science which seems to me as well ascertained as the law of gravitation.”

And again: “I am ready to accept, as an article of faith in science, valid for all time and in all space, that life is produced by life, and only by life.”

And Huxley left this record before he died: “The present state of knowledge furnishes us with no link between the living and the not-living.”

And Tyndall said: “Every attempt made in our day to generate life independent of antecedent life has utterly broken down.”

The Bible says: “In the beginning, God.” Again, in the first chapter of the Book of Genesis the first law of biology is enunciated nine times in the words, “after his kind.”